

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

THOUGHTS ON THE BIRTHDAY OF CHRIST

BISHOP OF COVENTRY

A PLAN FOR LORDS REFORM

VISCOUNT HINCHINGBROOKE

CHALLENGE IN GUIANA

BERNARD BRAINE

A PERFECT AUTOBIOGRAPHY

LORD ALTRINCHAM

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

ERIC GILLET

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY DENYS SMITH, HON. SIR
EDWARD CADOGAN, A. L. ROWSE, ROSEMARY REES, RUBY
MILLAR, GEOFFREY DEARMER AND ALEC ROBERTSON

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

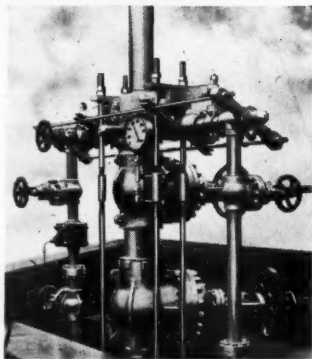
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EPISODES OF THE MONTH

ON November 3 the Queen opened Parliament for the second time in State, and for the first time wearing her Crown. By a typical British paradox the weather, which had been atrocious for her Coronation in June, was brilliant and sparkling for this November ceremony.

Now she and the Duke of Edinburgh have left this country and have begun their voyage of circumnavigation. We join in wishing them God-speed and we are sure they will receive as much pleasure and inspiration as they give in the various lands they visit. Their only regret must be the enforced separation from their children; but in future we trust that they will reside overseas for longer periods and that their children will then be able to accompany them. To the loyal people of this country, who have come to regard the Royal Family as a "fixture" in their midst, such an idea may at first cause bewilderment and distress; but the claims of the Commonwealth are paramount, and we can best demonstrate our devotion to the monarchy by fully appreciating and accepting its twentieth century status.

Bermuda

THE Queen's first port of call is (or, from the reader's point of view, was) Bermuda; and thither, on December 3, the Prime Minister will go, to hold with the President of the United States and the French Prime Minister the conference which had to be postponed last summer. So many pre-conditions have been laid down, by the Western Allies and more recently by the Russians, that the chances of a top-level meeting, on the lines suggested by Sir Winston Churchill in his speech of May 11, now seem remote. But the importance and potential usefulness of the Bermuda meeting should not on that account be underrated.

Economic Problems

APART from the many political problems upon which agreement between the Western Allies is vitally necessary, there are also very pressing economic problems which demand consideration. The Cold

War is not only an arms race and a struggle in the political field; it is also, and perhaps above all, an economic struggle. If the West can maintain its stability, and ensure material progress, in face of Communist intrigue and the well-known hazards of freedom, it may achieve victory sooner than it dares to hope—and without bloodshed. It is clear that the Russian autarky is by no means free from internal strains and stresses, and this means that the autocracy itself is to some extent insecure. We are not suggesting that the present régime in Russia is likely to collapse; that would be sheer wishful thinking. But we need not suppose that the Russian leaders are finding the Cold War altogether to their taste; it has its disadvantages for them as well as for us.

Need for Bold Decisions

IN our opinion the Bermuda Conference will be a failure if the three Western statesmen do not take some bold economic decisions. In America there are rumours of a recession; in France the social unrest which appeared so dramatically in the strikes last August has not been allayed; in Britain this year's increase in industrial production has not been matched by an increase in exports. These are dangerous symptoms, and it cannot be said that they are matters of purely national concern. Unless something can be done about the perennial dollar shortage, and unless there can be economic co-operation and give-and-take between Western Europe and America without loss of independence, the free world may be plunged into the chaos which Marxian prophets have foretold. Britain, France and the U.S.A. have, of course, their separate interests, but they also have a common interest in averting grave disturbance, and their leaders should face this issue at Bermuda with courage and imagination.

The Paramount Issue in Rhodesia

THE decision of Sir Roy Welensky and his elected colleagues to continue neither holding office in, nor co-operating with, the Northern Rhodesian Government has not been well received in this country—in our opinion, unjustly. Sir Roy's point of difference with the Colonial Secretary may at this distance seem inadequate; but we can understand that permanent harm might well have been done to the future of racial relations in the new Federation had he accepted the Colonial Secretary's *diktat* without this form of protest, further parley having been refused to him.

Everything in Rhodesia is for the moment overshadowed by the federal election to be held in the middle of this month. This is right and proper, because it is vital to the welfare of the Federation that the South African doctrine of *apartheid* should, if possible, be prevented here and now from taking any serious hold upon politics in the federal legislature. It follows that the Confederates, who hold that doctrine and are contesting a majority of seats in both Southern and Northern Rhodesia, must be

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prevented from winning a sufficient number of them to constitute a substantial Opposition in the first Federal Parliament. Compared with this, other issues are secondary.

An Ancient Bogey

NOTHING would help the Confederates more in some critical seats than to be enabled to represent the leaders of the Federal Party as "subservient to Downing Street." That is an ancient bogey which has done more harm to the champions of liberal ideals in Southern Africa than any other; and it is very natural that the Federal leaders should not have wished to make a present of it in this critical election to their Confederate antagonists.

It was therefore most unfortunate that constitutional changes in Northern Rhodesia should have been due for consideration at this particular juncture. If this mistiming was unavoidable—which it probably was—it would in our opinion have been wise to defer a final decision till after the election, by the means which Sir Roy suggested, or by some other means. As things stand, we can only trust that the Confederates will be routed at the federal election, and that some reasonable accommodation may thereafter be found on the local issue in the Northern Province.

New Lead in Kenya

AN absolutely decisive victory for Sir Godfrey Huggins at this first election is all the more important since it would undoubtedly be of help to those who are working for inter-racial co-operation on the lines of a progressive partnership both in the Union and in Kenya. The statement of policy issued unanimously last month by the elected European members in the Kenya legislature was launched at Nakuru by Mr. Michael Blundell, their leader, in a speech of admirable breadth and sanity, and is now being presented to every European constituency by its own member.

Other ideas took such deep root in the settler community during the long period of political ascendancy enjoyed by the late Lord Delamere that this new statement is bound to meet with bitter opposition in some die-hard circles. But European opinion in general has moved considerably in the last few months and seems likely to give Mr. Blundell the strength he requires for the next step he has in view, namely, a conference with representatives of the African, Arab and Asian communities. Wholeheartedly we wish him success in this bold lead.

A King of Men

NO one who ever met the late King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud (who died on November 9) can have left his majestic presence without feeling both its charm and its power. His features suggested an ancient Roman



IBN SAUD WITH WINSTON CHURCHILL AT THE FAYOUM OASIS, FEBRUARY 1945.

rather than an Arab, and he also differed markedly from his Bedouin fellow-tribesmen by having a giant frame. But even more imposing than this grandeur of physique was the impression he gave of both strength and breadth of mind. He was, in truth, a ruler and leader with the vision and fanatical resolve of Islam's earliest champions—the only one, moreover, produced by the Desert since that time.

Heir to the headship of a desert tribe in the very heart of Arabia, he was also reared as a devout member of the Wahabi sect, an austere reforming movement resembling our own Puritans; and in his cast of mind he was an Arab Cromwell, sharing the latter's unusual combination of gifts—intense religious fervour, deep political wisdom and untutored military genius, especially for rapid decision in the field.

The Saudi Ironsides

HE had also his own Ironsides, Bedouins trained to rigid discipline and great mobility, whom in his latter years he turned into a highly mechanized regular army with modern arms. Nothing but exceptional force and acumen of character could have built these levies up from the forty ragged comrades with mangy camels—fellow-refugees who followed him on his first venture at the age of twenty out of Kuwait. It was astounding that from so miserable a start he should within a few months have recaptured Riyadh, his family's fortified capital, by sheer personal prowess and an uncanny gift for handling all manner of men; and even more astounding that from Riyadh, after many vicissitudes, he should have made himself master of all Central Arabia in seven years.

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Faith and Ruthlessness

HE lived in daily danger of treachery, sleeping with a naked sword beside him and rarely for more than four hours in the twenty-four. Even so he could never have prevailed but for two characteristics in which he stood alone and which two of his preserved utterances illustrate well. One of these was a faith in his own leadership derived from a lifelong and unshaken belief that a mission to reform and unify his peoples had been laid upon him by God. "When I came to you," he said once to his own Nejdīs, "I was weak. I had no strength save in God, for I had no more than forty men with me, as you well know. Yet I have made you into one people and a great people." His presence and his speech nearly always sufficed to make others believe in his mission as devoutly as he did himself.

But based also on this sense there was in him an utter ruthlessness towards any who failed or betrayed his trust. "Your only value," he told a group of rebellious Ikhwan or Ironsides, "is in obedience to God and then to us. . . . It was by the sword that we conquered you. That same sword is even now over your heads. Beware, encroach not upon the rights of others. If you do, your value and the value of the dust shall be the same."

Binding the Desert Sand

ONLY thus could he have reformed and bound together the congeries of plundering nomads of which the greater part of Saudi Arabia consisted when he first took it in hand. Only thus could he have cleaned the Hedjaz after conquering it from the Hashemites and made Mecca once again safe for pilgrims—he an unrepentant heretic—with the ultimate acceptance of the Moslem world. But he was also capable of swift forgiveness of wrong; and when discipline or order were not at stake, he was remarkably generous.

It was Lawrence of Arabia's tragedy—and ours—that not till after the 1914-18 war, and the post-war settlement of the peripheral Arab States, did he or any other of our Middle Eastern advisers realize that in Ibn Saud there stood what no other Arab community had produced for some centuries—a born leader of heroic proportions, with a wisdom equal to his power. We must now pray that, with so much wealth pouring into it from the coastal wells of oil, his Desert Kingdom will continue to enjoy the peace and orderly progress which he inaugurated and sustained during an active rulership of no less than fifty-three years.

Second Phase in the Housing Drive

LAST month we ventured to hope that the Queen's Speech would "foreshadow specific measures for tackling the problems of rent, repairs and slum clearance . . ." We have not been disappointed. Mr.

Harold Macmillan, having attained his first objective—that of building new houses at the rate of about 300,000 a year—has now felt able to embark upon the second phase of his campaign. He has evolved an elaborate system whereby private landlords may increase their rents up to a certain limit, provided they spend the increase upon repairs and provided they have kept their premises in good repair in the past. Local authorities will be given more power to compel landlords to keep their houses fit for human habitation, if this can be done at reasonable cost; and grants will be made more readily available for the improvement and conversion of houses. Finally, local councils will be required to submit to the Minister a programme for the demolition and replacement of slum property, and they will be enabled, with the help of grants, to buy at site value houses which are condemned, and to make them more tolerable to live in until they are pulled down.

The Socialist Alternative

THE reaction of the Labour Party to Mr. Macmillan's proposals has so far been contemptible. While in office the Socialists often referred to the need to do something about repairs and rent restriction. Mr. Aneurin Bevan, the Minister responsible, said in 1949: "In the next Parliament . . . it is clear that the Rent Restrictions Acts will have to be dealt with." But when the time came he shirked his duty, and pleaded in excuse Labour's small majority in Parliament.

Now this same Mr. Bevan is leading the Socialist onslaught on Mr. Macmillan. He does not, it is true, suggest that the proposed rent increases will be for the private benefit and profit of landlords; in fact he has said that the latter are being given "a mouldy old turnip"—though Labour propagandists in the country are already making full use of the slogan "higher rents." Mr. Bevan merely asserts that the new policy will be unsuccessful, and his alternative, clearly stated, is that slum clearance, reconditioning and all rent-restricted houses should "eventually become the property of local authorities." Such an idea is no doubt congenial to a doctrinaire collectivist, but it is unlikely that a majority of the British public would wish to be council tenants. Above all it is most unlikely that the taxpayers and ratepayers of this country would be willing to face the huge financial implications of Mr. Bevan's scheme.

The remarks quoted above were made during the debate on the Address, and in the same speech Mr. Bevan said that "any fool" could build 300,000 houses a year. Mr. Macmillan has aptly replied that he can think of one fool who was not able to perform that easy feat!

Peace Comes to Bedford Square—

THE clamour from the N.F.U. lobby, upon which we commented in October, rose to a noisy climax and has subsided, except for a few rumblings, since the publication of the White Paper on farm prices, and its competent elucidation by the Minister in Parliament. Sir Thomas

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Dugdale might have experienced some surprise at this sudden shift from brickbats to bouquets, had he not always believed, and rightly, that the loudly trumpeted anxieties of the farmers' official leaders were much less fully shared by the farmers themselves. Some genuine anxiety there was, due probably to the fact that for a time the heavy crops of grain and potatoes were slow to sell, so that seasonal overdrafts lasted longer this year. But anxieties and overdrafts have been steadily diminishing as the Ministry absorbs the harvest at the support price.

In retrospect, although he was widely blamed at the time, the Minister seems to have been right in withholding his answer to the Bedford Square critics until he was in a position to give them the whole story. Had this self-imposed delay interfered with plans for expanding production he would have been at fault. But, as he showed convincingly in the Commons, it did not. Store cattle prices held firm, and the returns of increased livestock "on the hoof" are satisfactory.

—At Too High a Price ?

OF the new proposals the fatstock scheme, which has been the chief bone of contention, retains, as we hoped it would, the Government's original preference for auction marts. A guaranteed price will be achieved through deficiency payments, elaborated ingeniously by a special additional safeguard against malpractices, in the ring. Will these elaborate guarantees prove necessary in the event? It is strange to find so knowledgeable a countryman as Lord Halifax believing that conditions in auction marts might again resemble those of the 1930's, when there was plenty of cheap imported meat for butchers to buy. On the face of it, it seems more likely that, with a growing demand for meat in this country and a relative shortage abroad, even in the Argentine, open market prices may bear harder on consumers than on producers.

The Consumer's Interest

THIS view seems to underlie the criticisms advanced by, for example, the *Economist*, of the Government's proposal to handle other farm commodities through producer marketing boards in fulfilment of its election pledges. It is certainly pertinent to ask whether, when the Milk Marketing Board reassumes its statutory powers, the taxpayer can be asked to countenance a subsidy already running at over £80 millions a year, for an unrestricted output, when there is already plenty of liquid milk.

It seems, in fact, that the Government may justly preen itself on its plans for doing away with rationing next year and still keeping in being the necessary support prices for agriculture, but that it will have to be careful to forestall criticism from the consumer's side of the counter. There will be more to work on when it is seen how these new proposals stand up to the test of practice.

Uneasy Compromise on Television

THE Government's television policy was outlined in a White Paper published on November 13. It is proposed to set up, in competition with the B.B.C., another public corporation which would own and operate stations. Its directors would be appointed by the Government; it would be subject to rules and standards laid down by the Government; its initial capital would be provided by the Treasury. But it would hire broadcasting facilities to privately financed companies, whose revenue would come from advertisements. Advertising time would be allotted on the basis of so many minutes per hour, and there would be no sponsoring.

This is obviously a compromise, and we should say a most uneasy compromise, between the solution advocated by those who believe in freedom of the air and the solution desired by the B.B.C. monopolists. As we go to press an important debate is about to be held in the House of Lords, and whatever the outcome of that it is quite evident that the Government has failed to appease the critics of commercial television. At the same time it has failed to give full satisfaction to its own supporters, and to the very large number of people in the country who regard television as entertainment and want the widest possible choice of programmes.

House of Lords; "Further Consideration"

AT the very end of the Queen's Speech it was stated that "further consideration" would be given to House of Lords reform. This was better than no reference at all, but it was altogether too vague for those who think the British Constitution more important than any transient theme of politics. There may have been good reason—indeed we believe there was good reason—for abandoning the Tory pledge to restore the University seats (though we regret the somewhat abrupt and arbitrary manner in which this change of front was effected). A Party with a small majority in the House of Commons cannot alter the system of election to that Chamber, in a way which might conceivably strengthen the Party's own position, without opening itself to the charge of gerrymandering. But a reform of the composition of the House of Lords, reducing, as any proper reform must necessarily reduce, the number of Conservative peers who could sit and vote in Parliament, would be open to no such charge and would appear to all fair-minded people as plainly in the national interest. We therefore most earnestly appeal to the Government to introduce a Bill, after due consultation, during the present Session.

Leave Powers Alone at this Stage

LORD HINCHINGBROOKE has written an article for us this month, in which he outlines a plan for reforming the House of Lords without destroying its essential character. We entirely agree with him

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that it would be a great mistake to increase the powers of the House at this stage. The first necessity is to provide a membership which will command the fullest measure of public confidence. Once that is achieved, the question of powers will become relatively unimportant; the prestige of the House will count for more than any technical period of delay—as the opponents of reform know well enough. Bevanites as a tribe are “Single Chamber men,” and it was interesting to read in the November 6 issue of *Tribune*:

... once ... reformed, the new body would be bound to exercise greater powers whatever the formal definition of those powers might be.

Those who want Single Chamber Government can see the danger to their schemes. Let those who believe in our ancient bicameral Constitution not be blind to their opportunity!

Heredity Plus

WE support Lord Hinchinbrooke wholeheartedly in his reassertion of the hereditary principle (and we may remark in passing that he is himself a very good advertisement for it, being in the highest degree independent and public-spirited). Peerages must not cease to be hereditary, and the House of Lords must keep heredity as the basis of its composition. But in a reformed House the governing principle should be “heredity plus.” A peer of the United Kingdom should no longer inherit, along with his title, an automatic seat in the House of Lords. The test of quality should be applied to the principle of heredity, and the Upper House should be made, as a result, smaller and more select. At the same time those peers who failed to qualify should be given the right to vote in Parliamentary elections and to stand for the House of Commons, instead of being left to share, with lunatics and convicts, the penalties of disfranchisement.

Balanced Composition

BUT even this would not suffice. Lord Hinchinbrooke mentions the problem of the “backwoodsmen”—the large potential majority of peers with which the Conservative Party is endowed, or afflicted. His remedy for this very serious defect is a system of election analogous to that already used in the case of Scottish peers. This would certainly reduce the number and the preponderance of Conservatives in the Upper House, but we are not sure that it would go quite far enough in the required direction. Enemies of the House of Lords could still say that it was a Tory stronghold, and that its members, though they might themselves be distinguished and qualified, were elected by people who had no special qualifications.

What, then, is the answer to this problem? How is a balanced composition to be achieved without discarding the principle of “heredity plus”, or confronting the public with a scheme of unbearable complexity?

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

A purely nominated Chamber would lack those elements of freedom and continuity which are so vital to the House of Lords. Yet there is always the danger that a reform plan which combines all the necessary and desirable ingredients will be totally incomprehensible to the general public.

The Crown's Discretion

WE are led to the conclusion that the House of Lords should be composed, in each Parliament, roughly as follows. A very simple and stringent test should be applied to the United Kingdom peers; e.g. only those who were Privy Councillors, members of the Orders of Chivalry in the highest rank, holders of the Order of Merit, and Companions of Honour, should be summoned to sit as a matter of right. This schedule of qualifications would not pass without cavil, but specific rank is preferable to any vague category (such as "Chairman of a Chamber of Commerce"); and it is also worth noting that a test like the one we have suggested was used to decide which peers should be admitted to the Coronation Service in Westminster Abbey, without having to ballot for seats. When reforming a venerable institution, precedents should not be ignored; they may be more helpful than any rational argument!

The House would thus contain the cream of the United Kingdom peerage. It would also contain the Princes of the Blood, the Bishops, the Law Lords, and the Scottish representative peers (if these were not merged with, and subjected to the same test as, the U.K. peers). But the House would not yet be complete. Apart from those qualified, there should still be discretion to summon peers up to a certain number. This number should be fixed, so that the House could never be "swamped," but this discretionary power should enable Party strengths in the Lords to bear some relation to those in the Commons. The power would, of course, be exercised by the Crown, but it would be exercised on the advice of the Prime Minister of the day, who might in his turn, as a matter of courtesy and custom, hold discussions through "the usual channels."

A Chance not to be Missed

BUT whatever the details of the scheme adopted, Conservative statesmen should no longer shrink from reforming the House of Lords. They will have to face angry opposition from the Left wing of the Labour Party, and subtler, more insidious opposition from faint-hearts in their own Party. They will have to treat with amused contempt the reluctance of the House of Commons as a trade union to add to the prestige and importance of "another place." They will have to be prepared to act even if the Liberals refuse to co-operate with them, though it is reasonable to hope that the Liberals will support them.

In other words, they will need to have the courage of their convictions. Is this too much to expect of a Conservative Government?

And they came with haste . . .
(St. Luke)



And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon those clouded hills?
(Robert Blake)

Christmas, 1953

ONCE again Christmas comes to lift our minds and hearts above the ugliness of modern life and modern controversy. Yet Christianity is no escapist creed; it is, as the Bishop of Coventry insists in his fine article this month, a realistic as well as a miraculous answer to our problems.

We are constantly being reminded of the decay of moral standards; the crime figures alone are a terrible symptom. But it is foolish to suppose that politicians or economists or psychologists can save us from the consequences of irreligion. They have their work to do, but they cannot cure the malady of a nation which has lost its Faith. They cannot give freedom of soul to men and women who have been brought up without the fear of God or the love of Christ; who have never learnt to pray or worship, or even to read the New Testament.

The British are not by nature infidel, and we are sure that there will soon be another great Christian revival in this country. Perhaps it is already beginning. Meanwhile we must frankly recognize the prevalence of materialism and fight against it for all we are worth.

A Text and A Wish

IN his Epistle to the Ephesians (Chapter II) St. Paul wrote:

... now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh.
... For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity ... for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.

In wishing all our readers a very happy Christmas, we can only pray that the whole world will one day acknowledge the great truth which was revealed to St. Paul on the road to Damascus.

THOUGHTS ON THE BIRTH-DAY OF CHRIST

By THE BISHOP OF COVENTRY

MATERIALISM, in the sense of "go-getting" after the material things of life, is no new thing. A philosophy of materialism has been held by plenty of intellectuals in the past. But a philosophy of materialism, accepted consciously or unconsciously by the mass of ordinary people in the English nation, is a new thing. Lord Samuel has recently referred to this and called attention to a collapse of the moral law and a threat to the life of the nation; his speech in the Lords contained a challenge to the Christian Church to make intelligible its alternative.

The issue lies between a closed universe, confined entirely to the order of nature, in which God is a speculation and the moral law a mere convenience; and, on the other hand, an open universe, where this world of nature and man himself are dependent upon a transcendent order, from which man derives and from which he receives the moral law.

We have been pre-occupied with vast new fields of discovery about the order of nature. We have manipulated these discoveries in material progress; whether we manipulate them to our complete destruction is another matter. Dead Sea fruits on the one hand and the fear of destruction on the other are now deeply troubling "modern man," in Professor Jung's phrase, "in search of a soul." The materialist universe seems to be neither intellectually sufficient nor sufficient in any other way; yet many seem to find the Christian Faith irrelevant or inarticulate for their

present needs. I am thinking in terms of the ordinary man. For him, on first sight, the Christian Faith seems to come into immediate conflict with the familiar and commonly accepted results of anthropology and biology. The Christian Faith seems to speak in terms of an out-dated theory of "original sin" and to tie that doctrine to an historic Fall—the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve. In fact the Garden of Eden is relevant enough; the atom bomb is the latest equivalent of the apple of knowledge.

The Christian doctrine of original sin remains a ruthless and realistic diagnosis of human nature. The truth of it has been stated in the traditional symbolism of a Fall, and symbolism is a legitimate form in which truth can be expressed. But the doctrine can also be re-stated in terms of modern biology and be supported by it. We can look at man biologically within the order of nature. We can see with the biologist and the psychologist, as observers, the fact that to become a person, the child must detach himself from the womb, the mother, and the home. He has to assert himself against other people and against nature. He has biologically to engage in an egotistical struggle for survival as an individual. At the same time, he must co-operate and submit to others if he or the group to which he belongs is to survive. Therefore, in his biological structure, man, wherever he exists, is set in a tension of conflict from which there is no escape in this natural order.

Modern psychology goes further in

its analysis. It takes the lid off human nature and exposes the Nero, the saint, the Macbeth, the moralist, the sex maniac, the lover of the Vita Nuova, jostling within us all. At the same time, modern psychology as a whole accepts uncritically those assumptions of the physicists which govern largely the outlook, conscious and unconscious, of the modern man—those of a closed universe within the natural order. The problem of the soul is that of an adaptation within itself to its environment, whether with Adler the adaptation is to be in terms of power, with Freud of sex, or with Jung of gnosis. There is no spiritual environment which is not a projection of the human consciousness and religion is defined in terms of subjective compensation or of racial and personal mythology. There is no escape for the human soul introverted upon itself. We have the *corruptio pessima* of Saint Augustine, where the soul turns round and round like a squirrel in a cage, everything rooted in inescapable self, an insoluble antinomy from which, within the natural order, there is no way out. The psychologist may set the antinomy, but the psychotherapist can find no escape.

Yet the Christian Faith, and the whole human tradition of religious experience, brings to the antinomy of the soul another dimension than that of the closed order of nature. Man's existence is set not only in the dimension of the space-time of the natural world, but also in the dimension of a transcendental order. The religious experience is of the human soul, everywhere, always, and in its essential being operated upon from within by God, whether this process is described in the New Testament terms of the Logos—"of the true light that lights every man"—or of the Holy Spirit, or of the categorical imperative of the moral law. By the operation of the

Holy Spirit which the Christian Faith speaks of as "grace," there comes the release from the tensions, the reconciliation, and the escape that puts us on the "path of salvation." The Christian Faith is therefore relevant in its realistic diagnosis of human nature and human needs.

"Two great wars," said Lord Samuel, "have shaken faith in the providential order." So the suffering violently shown to us has shaken faith in the traditional picture of God. The Christian Faith has always been preoccupied with suffering. It will go much further than Lord Samuel in stringent analysis, not only of war but of all we see of the movement of suffering through the whole of history and in our immediate neighbour. Some traditional views have implied that human suffering is the result of sin, not of the individual but collectively of the race. God gave man freedom and this is what man does with it. But it is obvious that a vast amount of suffering rises out of the fact of existence for which man is not responsible, collectively or individually. Professor A. V. Hill put the moral enigma of India before the British Association. The population of India was kept down by disease and famine to the limits of its food supply. Science and medicine increase the population at a ratio beyond any food resources. The suffering does not result from any collective form of sin; infection and the pains of death independently afflict us.

But we must go further. We must face all the facts. We cannot separate human suffering from that of the animal creation. Our imaginations have lately been horrified by the biologists' picture of parasitic animals and the suffering they inflict upon their victims. But it does not need the biologist to show us that the whole structure of animal existence, including

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that of man, is keyed to the fact of a life for a life. Man eats the cow, the cow the grass, and the grass has its food predigested by the microbe. The whole observed range of existence is made up of the exchange of life, and science may even bring atomic structures as sub-organisms into the same universal pattern of exchange.

There is also the vast positive side of the beauty and order of creation, of happiness, joy and heroism; but the reverse side of the Medusa head is there. Job demands: "Show me this side and that and make one intelligible in the other." There is one basic traditional view of how to handle, abstractly, the problem of suffering; that God created either in the mind or in reality a Utopian and Paradisal order of existence, and that whether by man's or angel's abuse of freedom an alien and destructive element appeared in the whole system—sin and suffering—and an order atwist resulted. In fact, God made a mistake and has been trying to put the result right ever since.

No interpretation of this kind can account for the whole drama of life within the world we know; nor can it be reconciled with our conception of the Divinity.

By definition God is the infinite Mind and Being—all-powerful and omniscient. He is in charge of the whole operation; He knew the potentialities in the explosion of a ball of gas three thousand million years ago. Every detail of the articulated order of continuous creation must have been clear to the Being who by definition is the cause of the whole order. God gave man as a new creation his own form of freedom, and from the start He must have foreseen the abuse of freedom and the effects of sin and suffering upon the innocent and guilty.

The central dogmatic answer of the Christian Faith is that from the start

of creative imagining God determined the Incarnation in Christ. By that mystery, that miracle, which the Christian Faith asserts, God Himself would enter and did enter this world order and let the whole consequence of what he had determined fall upon Himself.

Until I came to the mention of dogma I followed a course of what appeared to be rational and abstract argument. The intention was to show that the Christian Faith does not dodge the issue of suffering, that original sin is not nonsense but radical sense, and that the Christian answer is at any rate morally intelligible. But the central beliefs of the Christian Faith cannot be reached by a process of abstract argument. The Church claims the possession, or the gift, of a special miraculous experience, and struggles in every generation to express to itself and to others the truth which it sees in the Cross. It has its own vocabulary and symbols—of atonement, sacrifice, salvation—and it stumbles over the coherence of different aspects of the same experience.

But everything the Christian Faith has to say comes from the single centre of its dogmatic faith, its dealing with the tremendous enigma of the whole of existence. The Incarnation is a breaking through of the transcendental order into this world of time and space. It shows the life of God Himself as an exchange of life within His own Being. The Incarnation and Crucifixion constitute an exchange of life between the Creator and His order of creation, which includes not only man but, as Christian theology has held, the animal creation as well.

An event in history, as a revelation of God, shows the structure of spiritual life everywhere. The Christian doctrine of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" is a symbol of the truth that all human existence, in its

inception, its end and beginning, in this world and beyond, is governed by the principle of sacrifice and change. The Christian Faith dares to express mystically that Christ, and God through Christ, in His exchange of living with us, draws to Himself all the lesser calvaries, not only of voluntary heroic suffering, but of the man, woman, child, and any other creature, caught up without present understanding in the mystery of sacrifice.

We have to consider the relation of God and man to the animal creation. We cannot enter into the obscurity of animal life which is opaque to us, but we cannot separate the spiritual principles upon which the life of man is based from those belonging to the animal creation. There is a biological and also a spiritual continuity in the animal creation. We can observe and understand some law of exchange which, at our own level of being, we can apprehend in the Cross ; but we are compelled to say that the exchange of life in the animal world works on the same spiritual principle. The line of our search into the understanding of the animal must come from our understanding of man. We cannot understand man—his sufferings, his destiny and his exchange of being—as a by-product of biology. We give up the whole problem of the mystery of the animal creation if we say it is merely an unintelligible biological event. Blake has a great phrase : "The cut worm forgives the plough." The Christian Church, in living out its faith, is pre-occupied and obsessed with the experience of forgiveness. The interchange of life and the reconciliation between man and man, man and God, and also in Blake's understanding, between the animal and man and God, are part of a single spiritual context.

The Christian Faith sets before us the panorama of total existence. It has

to find its own symbolism, just as the physicist finds his ; but these symbols have stood the test of time and of an ever-working, ever-widening conscience.

I remember hearing in an American University a lecture delivered in a Gothic laboratory, set in stained glass, by a pontifical pundit who pointed to the stained glass pictures of dissected worms and tadpoles and said : "The modern world has long since discarded the outworn symbols. These are the symbols we use to-day to express religion and other truth." In a rational fury, I asked the pundit, in the middle of his circle of consenting admirers, if he thought the mystery of man and the universe was better expressed in an unconscious worm than in the symbol of the Cross. We ought not to allow the many humbugs of this type to get away with it. It is unreasonable to suppose that a lab. boy, after receiving sufficient instruction in physics or mechanics, has either the experience or the terms (symbolical or otherwise) to interpret the universe ; to improve, as it were, upon the experience and vocabulary of St. Francis, Dante, or Aquinas. There is a patronage to-day towards the great structure of the Christian Faith which is intolerable. We are in danger of selling our inheritance to the promoted lab. boy.

But we must admit that our interpretation of life does not belong to the realm of metaphysical and abstract argument. We are asked to make our decision upon life. Is it to be a Christian decision ? The idiot boy—is he just a waste product of the biological process ? I have my own picture of an elderly aunt devoting her life to the care of an idiot boy and this is not a matter of sentiment ; it is a direct crack of the whip of reality over life. There is a quality of the spirit beyond anything to be found in the successful utilitarian virtues. It is a reality of the

spirit to be understood in the Christian experience of the Cross. As to the child's own life, we do not know at what mysterious level God deals with the depths of his unconscious being, any more than we can determine God's relation to that of the animal creation.

I will end, therefore, with this Christian symbol of the Lord Christ coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration to lay the hands of God upon the idiot child. The decisions which

govern our view of the whole universe depend upon the most ordinary decisions of living, and whether, for instance, we go with our children on Christmas Day to kneel before the intelligible mystery and to take part in that exchange of love which the whole Christian truth symbolizes and which, in Dante's words, "is the love which moves the sun and the other stars."

NEVILLE COVENTRY.

A PLAN FOR LORDS REFORM

By VISCOUNT HINCHINGBROOKE

THE Conservative Government has halted the nation's downward drift, but not much more. It has put an end to our economic crisis, and it has arrested the decadent trends of our political democracy. These achievements have occupied two years out of the life-time of this Parliament. About the same time remains to make the re-establishment of full-scale Socialism a virtual impossibility by the time we are compelled to face the electorate. Some quick thinking and quick acting will have to be done in the next twelve months if we are not to leave in good running order the constitutional and departmental machinery so necessary to our Left-wing extremists for their stated purposes. It is essential in that time to break up, or render innocuous, much more of the war-time apparatus of government if Conservatism is to make any permanent impact on the post-war era. That it is conscious of these sterner duties the Government shows sign in the proposals contained in the Queen's Speech to give further consideration to the reform of the Upper House.

In the 1945 Parliament the House of Lords concerned itself with the inspec-

tion and emendation of Socialist legislation. It acted not at all as a brake upon the political and economic measures which brought near ruin to our mercantile nation and Empire. On the contrary, the House itself was subjected to, and accepted, pejorative reform. In the next Socialist Parliament this ancient institution may stand alone between the millions who have voted for they know not what, and a handful of ambitious men who will not scruple to interpret their decision for them, and interpret it in a sense inimical to their freedom and welfare. If the House of Lords is to appear to all men of goodwill, of loyalty and tradition, the proud bulwark of a nation's liberty, then it must have purged from it very soon any archaic and unjustifiable elements which it still contains.

It is significant that the Labour Party's statement of policy, *Challenge to Britain*, avoids all mention of Lords reform. The Socialists are understandably reluctant to do our doctoring for us. And it is Conservative and not Socialist medicine that the Upper House needs. It would be wasting our time to invite the Labour leaders into another conference. If they came

it could only be to indulge in spoiling tactics, because an unreformed House holds electoral advantages for them. There are votes to be picked up here and there by pointing the finger of scorn at irresponsible aristocratic privilege. Labour will surely ignore the need for constructive reform and use the Lords in ribaldry as a yardstick by which the unattached voter may endorse their own modernity and progressiveness.

The view of the man in the street on the House of Lords is broadly that, as a council of the nation on great affairs, it contains more disinterested and experienced members than the House of Commons, and that its debates are on a higher level; but that as a legislative body, particularly on internal financial and social questions, there is a latent danger of sudden and capricious rear-guard action by "hereditary backwoodsmen." That no such action has taken place for many years has done nothing to eradicate this prejudice.

There is, therefore, little more that need be done, and no less should be done, than to remove this factor detrimental to the prestige of the Upper House. It is very important that our legislative proposals should not go further than this. To create fresh electoral disabilities in the course of eliminating the old ones would be disastrous. The ancient wisdom of the Prayer Book reformers is apposite. We must guard against sundry inconveniences ensuing, many times more and greater than the evils which we intend to remedy. It is clear that legislation will have to be most moderate and cautious.

This consideration appears to me to rule out altogether a reform of powers being undertaken with and alongside a reform of composition. A ship must undergo her trials in the Clyde before being entered for the blue riband of the

Atlantic. The electorate will want time to test the Upper House in its new guise, and performing its present functions, before heaping on it any new constitutional honours. A reform of powers must therefore be deferred to a future Parliament. In any case, it is for consideration whether, with the speed at which public opinion is formed and made prevalent in these days, a period of twelve months' legislative delay is not fully equivalent to the two-year period provided for in 1911.

But if Conservatives defer to the distant future any consideration of added powers for the Upper Chamber, nothing should be done which in effect would limit further the slender powers it now possesses. To turn the House into a Senate elected by popular vote would do just this. Examples abound in overseas Parliaments of the exercise of the authority of the Senate against decisions of the Executive. But one can call to mind few, if any, incidents illustrative of the restraining hand of the Senate against rash and intolerant legislative action by the Lower House. This may partly be due to some similarity, if not identification, in the methods of election to either House. If both Chambers are elected in the same sort of period and by the same sort of people their decisions will tend to be the same, and one will be useless as an instrument of revision or stay of execution against the decisions of the other. The power of the House of Lords, limited though it is, rests uniquely on dissimilarity to the Lower House.

It is necessary to dispose shortly of one system, perhaps the only alternative to the principle behind the proposals which follow, by which the composition of the Lords could be changed and its power continue to rest on dissimilar membership. In theory there is nothing to stop a catalogue

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being compiled of all the leading trade associations, professional houses, incorporated societies, trade unions and other bodies, and asking them to nominate one or more of their leaders for service in the Upper House. What rules any such suggestion out of court immediately, however, is the violent controversy that would be caused by such an affront to the evolutionary development of our Constitution, no less than by its foreign and decidedly fascist flavour.

By reasoning in this way about the Constitution, and on grounds which are largely *a priori*, we are driven to accept the only other system of membership which will work and that is the present hereditary principle. So much spleen has been vented on heredity in the past fifty years that it is almost surprising to find this traditionalist solution emerging as the cold result of an exercise in political science. It begins to appear that some minds were clever enough to devise this powerful factor for stability in human government long before our Left-wing "progressives" claimed all omniscience in political organization. It begins to appear that an institution founded on this "vicious" principle may really come one day to stand for individual freedom and justice against the petty tyrants of our managerial revolution.

If I have brought my readers to share with me the conviction that the new Chamber must be composed of hereditary peers, it remains to develop the process by which those peers selected to serve may be deemed to be, in the general judgment, the most reliable councillors. There are three practical means by which this judgment can be attained :

- (a) By appointment by the Crown.
- (b) By election.
- (c) By the application of certain qualifying rules and standards.

The Prerogative of the Crown to create peers is an institution older than the House of Lords itself. In modern times the execution of the Prerogative appears out of an unrevealed process of consultation between Downing Street and the Palace. There is value both to the State and to the individual concerned in this almost mystical association. The State is guaranteed the service of an individual of political experience and distinction ; the individual is rewarded for outstanding public work by the Crown's Recognizance.

If the number of hereditary peers who are to be entitled to sit in the new House is to be brought into some sort of relation with the active debating membership of the last few years, a method of election will have to be devised. To comply with the principle mentioned above—essential dissimilarity with the Commons—and in order rightly to surround the Chamber with its own hereditary aura, an "electoral college" of the whole peerage will have to be set up and some procedure established analogous to the Scottish election of representative peers. It may be of interest to my readers to have this procedure described.

The election of the sixteen representatives takes place at a meeting of the Scottish Peers held at Holyrood Palace, presided over by the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, and convened by virtue of a Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal. Every peer of Scotland who holds a peerage which was in existence at the date of the Act of Union, or who can prove his title to the satisfaction of the House of Lords, has the right to vote at the election of the representative peers. An authentic list of the peerage of Scotland as it existed on May 1, 1707, is called over whenever an election is held. Every peer present votes for sixteen representatives. Any peer unable to be

present is entitled to send a signed list of sixteen peers for whom he records his vote, or to name another peer as his proxy, who votes for sixteen peers on his behalf. The Lord Clerk Register sums up the votes of the peers present, the proxies and the signed lists, and the sixteen peers for whom most votes are cast are thus elected. A representative peer sits for the duration of a Parliament. If he dies, or becomes legally incapable of sitting, during the course of the Parliament for which he has been elected, another Scottish peer is elected to fill the vacancy. There are only 113 titles on the Long Roll of the peers of Scotland. At the last General Election in 1951, 23 peers were present, there was 1 proxy, and there were 24 signed lists. There are only 16 Scottish peers who are not to-day peers of Parliament. All the rest sit either by virtue of U.K. peerages or as Scottish representative peers. It follows that the process of election consists of a quite manageable number of Scottish peers reducing from 32 to 16 the number who do not sit by virtue of U.K. peerages.

There immediately arises the question whether peers elected in this manner should sit for a Parliament or for life. Previous arguments against introducing House of Commons methods apply here just as forcibly. Moreover, to elect only for one Parliament involves a further interference with the hereditary principle, upsets the present arrangement in the Lords, where U. K. peers sit in effect for life, and might well create openings for unseemly jobbery by giving candidates too frequent opportunity to "woo" the college with their personal qualifications.

Another method of bringing the law governing entitlement to sit into conformity with current practice is to establish criteria of public service. There are 780 hereditary peers of the United Kingdom (apart from peers of the Blood Royal and minors). An

analysis of the political affiliations of these and of the 21 representative peers of Scotland and Ireland shows :

Conservatives and Allies .	491
Labour	62
Liberal	45
Independent or unstated .	203
	801
	—

If those who had inherited their peerages had in addition to show a qualification of public service (i.e., Governor-General, Governor, Ambassador or Minister abroad, High Commissioner, Member of Royal Household, Minister of the Crown, Commander-in-Chief, Head of Government or United Nations Department or Agency, Chairman of local Council, President of Federation of British Industries, Chairman of British Chambers of Commerce and comparable bodies, M.P. for more than one Parliament), the 780 hereditary peers would be reduced to about 279. An analysis of the political affiliations of these and of the 21 representative peers of Scotland and Ireland shows :

Conservatives and Allies .	162
Labour	57
Liberal	16
Independent or unstated .	65
	300
	—

Of these 300 peers, 161 are peers of first creation and 139 are second and subsequent generation peers.

An analysis of divisions and attendance records in recent years produces the very interesting result that only ten or twelve of those peers who are very active in the Lords would be excluded, if this admittedly rather broad category of standards of public service were transcribed into law. Nevertheless, it must immediately be said that the very fact that it is possible to arrive

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at such detailed conclusions as to the admission or non-admission of a few individuals would greatly enhance the drama of debate on precisely what criteria of previous service to establish. There is also the very important consideration that no mechanical method of selection can contain any element of anticipation. The young hereditary peer who, before he succeeded, jobbed round the world would not be able to prove his capacity in the very place to which he now has right of entry. He would have to prove it first elsewhere. This disability also applies, though with less certainty, to the method of election. For these reasons the means of selection by a scheduling of standards of service cannot be made mandatory.

I hope that I have now brought my readers to accept the bare principles of a plan. No change is intended with regard to peers of the Blood Royal, Bishops and Law Lords. The Royal Prerogative to summon peers to Parliament should be extended to peeresses in their own right, whose eldest sons would stand for election on the death of their mothers. Peers and peeresses who were the first holders of their titles would, on the appointed day, become members of the Upper House and be exempted from the provision to limit the numbers. All subsequent first creations would likewise be exempted. Peers of second and subsequent generation would, before the appointed day, be elected for life by an electoral college of the U.K. peerage. The procedure for election would be analogous to the Scottish system. The Act would contain a schedule of general criteria of public service. A duty would be laid on the authorities of the college to furnish members with a copy of this schedule to aid them in the election of candidates. The qualifications of the candidates themselves would also be supplied. The number to be elected should be stated in the Act, and should equal the

number on a certain day of second and subsequent generation peers who fulfilled the qualifications in the schedule, (now approximately 139). No peer would be entitled to sit in, or stand for election to, the House of Lords until he had taken an oath of accession to the college. No peer would be entitled to sit in, or stand for election to, the House of Commons after he had taken the oath of accession, but peers unsuccessful in the election could withdraw from the college and stand for election to the Commons. There would be provision for peers and peeresses to retire. An eldest son desiring to follow immediately on the death or retirement of his parent could petition the Crown, and on the issue of a warrant take the oath of accession to the college and gain his seat. The warrant would be equivalent to the Crown's nomination to the elected body of the Chamber and be distinct from the Prerogative of peerage creation. Should there be any vacancies in the elected body at the beginning of any Parliament the college would meet to fill them.

Any plan produced in detail tends to attract criticism away from the broad features of the plan to the details themselves. On the other hand, a mere statement of principles tends to create confusion as to how those principles would work out in practice. I am conscious of this dilemma and have sought as far as possible to avoid it. The object of this article will be achieved if my Conservative readers lay it aside with no more than the conviction that our Party is now confronted with the opportunity—more promising, perhaps, than for many years to come—to establish once and for all the prestige of an institution which it holds, and which the country holds, in high regard.

HINCHINGBROOKE.

CHALLENGE IN GUIANA

By BERNARD BRAINE

IT is unfortunate that Parliament and Press give serious attention to Colonial affairs only when there is a crisis or disturbance in some part of the Colonial Empire. As a consequence attention is focused on failure. Achievement is often overlooked. We lose sight of the broader picture and are in danger of misreading the meaning of events.

In the very week that the Commons debated the Government's action in British Guiana the Colonial Secretary announced a further constitutional advance in the Gold Coast—clear evidence that our policy of helping Colonial peoples attain self-government within the Commonwealth, whenever they are ready for it, remains unchanged. Yet this welcome recognition of the growing maturity of one Colonial territory passed unnoticed. Dr. Jagan got the headlines. Dr. Nkrumch was forgotten.

Not that there is any similarity between the two. Dr. Nkrumch has shown wisdom and restraint in office; accordingly his reputation has soared. Dr. Jagan, on the other hand, has succeeded only in bringing his country to the edge of ruin. As to his reputation among those who genuinely desire to help Colonial peoples in their struggle for freedom and self-expression, let the intensely-nationalist Jamaican Peoples National Party speak—for in its statement issued at the height of the Guiana crisis it soundly condemned Jagan and his associates for the "betrayal of the cause of Colonial people the world over and the reckless and stupid betrayal of those who voted for them."

First, therefore, we should understand the nature of the Guiana conspiracy—for to some extent it is still

obscure. The fact that Jagan and some, though not all of the leaders of his People's Progressive Party, which came to power last April, are Communists, have been behind the Iron Curtain and have made contact with those who inspire and direct the Communist Parties of the world, was not in itself good reason for setting aside the Constitution.

After all, when Jagan declared in a ministerial broadcast that he was "a great admirer of the Soviet Union" and that Socialism, in his view, would evolve into "the higher Communist society," he was in good company. There are many in public life nearer home who have expressed such views in the past, but think differently now. It was not unreasonable to hope that in time this young revolutionary might change his ideas.

That he and his Ministers should behave boorishly towards the Queen's representative in the Colony, should spurn advice and neglect the job of day-to-day administration, was not in itself a reason for intervention. Such behaviour could be attributed to inexperience. Again, it was not unreasonable to hope that the Governor's well-known tact, patience and kindness might eventually work a transformation.

But the moment it became clear that Jagan's purpose was to promote chaos by engineering strikes which would materially damage the economic life of the country, while at the same time undermining the loyalty of Government servants and the police and threatening all who stood in his way with violence, then it was the bounden duty of the British Government to act—and to act quickly.

Far from the suspension of the Con-

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stitution being an act of brutal aggression against a young democracy, it was the only thing which could have been done to keep alive the prospects of real freedom for the Guianese. In fact, as Dr. Rita Hinden, who was a member of the Commission which recommended the Guiana Constitution, has said, constitutional advance in the Colonies is an act of faith on the part of the British Parliament and people and "when that trust is perverted, we become partners to the betrayal if we take no action *while we can.*"

Surely one lesson our generation should have learnt is that a government is not necessarily democratic because it happens to win an election. Repeatedly Fascists and Communists have used the apparatus of democracy in order to effect its destruction. Of course, the P.P.P. did not pose as a Communist Party in the Guiana elections last April. Had it done so it would have been defeated. Nor do all its members approve of the course steered since. It is on record that some of the P.P.P. Ministers privately confessed their misgivings to the Governor.

But consider the situation just before the British Government intervened. On September 26 the editor of the *Daily Argosy*—one of the colony's leading newspapers—struck out courageously: "Here, events are being made to follow the same grim pattern with which we should now be all too familiar, for we have seen it work out in Italy, in Germany, in Russia and all her satellites. . . . First the democratic processes are used to gain a degree of power, then those processes are subverted, the means of force and the administration of justice taken over and used for political ends, then finally the dissentients are 'liquidated' and the young moulded to a pattern through the seizure and misuse of the education system and youth organizations. As

much of this as they have had time and opportunity to do here the P.P.P. and the P.P.P.-controlled Government have already done or are doing."

How, then, if our object is to help the Colonial peoples to attain self-government in conditions which will enable them to enjoy freedom from fear as well as from want, could we have failed to have acted as we did?

For here was a land which could be brought very swiftly to disaster if it suited the purpose of determined men. It is poor and underdeveloped. Its potentialities are often exaggerated. The wonder is that so much has been done to provide work and sustenance for the 500,000 people who live there. Nine out of ten live in the flat, narrow coastal belt reclaimed from the sea and brought into cultivation by the Dutch centuries ago—a man-made environment which can be maintained and improved only at great expense and by the continued inflow of capital and skills from overseas.

Guiana is vulnerable in many ways. Perpetual war has to be waged against water. Sea-walls must be maintained. Elaborate water-control measures are necessary. There is too great a dependence upon the production of sugar for export. Yet no other crop yields so high a cash return per acre. And it is upon sugar that the prosperity of the colony depends.

Even here there are special difficulties. It is an achievement that sugar is produced at all in British Guiana. It is phenomenal that it is produced efficiently. For one thing, owing to the waterlogged nature of the soil, it takes up to 14 tons of cane to make 1 ton of sugar as against 6-8 tons in other producing territories. Fortunately for the Colony, Britain buys two-thirds of sugar produced, and does so under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement at above the level of world prices.

Certainly living standards are low and ought to be raised. But current wages are about as high as they can be having regard to the earning capacity of the Colony's industries. In fact, the situation could worsen, since the eradication of malaria in the coastal belt—a remarkable achievement—has removed a major check upon population increase, and the number of mouths to feed and jobs to find is mounting rapidly.

Capacity to absorb additional population and improve living standards depends, therefore, upon the extent to which productivity can be raised and new resources developed. Dr. Jagan knew very well that there was dire need in British Guiana for new capital investment on a substantial scale to carry out additional water-control schemes, to expand agriculture, to exploit timber and mineral resources and to extend communications and that these were the basic requirements without which nothing worthwhile could ever be accomplished.

In the last year or so overseas capital was beginning to show interest in the Colony. The International Bank was proposing to take a hand in its development. All this was known to Jagan and his fellow-Ministers. By deliberately embarking upon activities designed to undermine confidence and drive away capital they have done infinite harm to the very people whose interests they claimed to champion last April.

For the moment the rot has been stopped. But for how long? And where do we go from here?

A great deal depends upon the Guianese themselves. Nobody can be sure at this stage what they are thinking. One can only hazard a guess. Although the P.P.P. swept into power in the last election, winning eighteen out of twenty-four seats, they polled only 37 per cent. of the total electorate, or 51 per cent.

of the votes actually cast. There is reason to believe that many who did vote for them were disillusioned before the crisis came to a head, but were fearful of saying so openly. The Archbishop of the West Indies has testified that as he was making a railway journey through part of the Colony "... groups of people came to me at almost every station urging me to make representations on their behalf for something to be done to put an end to the tyranny in which, as one man put it, 'it was no longer safe to express an opinion even at home.'"

But will *all* who voted for the P.P.P. last April be grateful that the Colony has been saved from bloodshed and ruin? Are they even convinced that there would have been bloodshed and ruin? It is doubtful. It is difficult enough in Britain, where we have perhaps the most experienced and mature electorate in the world, for electors to visualize a state of affairs which might have obtained if something else had not intervened!

It is imperative, therefore, that positive steps be taken now to convince the largely illiterate and ignorant supporters of the P.P.P. that they have been duped. Not a moment should be lost. For even if the more moderate elements in the P.P.P. break with the Jagans, a determined effort will be made to keep the cause of Communism alive. And this can be done, even if the militants go underground, for they possess not merely the best, but the only effective political organization in the country.

Somehow new political forces must be encouraged to develop—the natural desire of the Guianese masses for a better life must find an outlet. Recent events have brought together men of moderate opinion. The two largest parties opposing the P.P.P. have merged. Happily they possess leaders of character and integrity—men like Kendall,

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Carter and Fernandes—passionate believers in the destiny of their country, yet realists who understand its problems and difficulties.

Nevertheless, it could be fatal to thrust responsibility upon such men too soon. They must be given time to build up their organization, to get their roots deep down in the hearts and minds of the people.

Indeed, the battle must be waged and won on many fronts. One encouraging sign has been the voluntary decision of the local T.U.C. to dissolve itself in order to make a fresh start free from Communist influence. Here is opportunity for the British T.U.C. to give practical help and guidance to the trade union movement in the Colony.

But political and industrial action cannot succeed in creating a genuine democracy unless great economic and social changes are brought about. And here it should be understood that development is not just a question of injecting so much capital into the Colony. If it is to bring lasting benefit, then development must be concerned not only with producing new wealth, but the way in which it is produced. We shall not be successful in accelerating economic development in British Guiana—or anywhere else for that matter—unless we can stir the imagination of the masses and carry them with us.

How best can this be done? Undoubtedly there is no better way of building a healthy, self-reliant society in tropical lands than by giving peasant families a real stake in the land and inducements to farm it efficiently. Where so large a part of the population is engaged, as it is in Guiana, in casual

employment on great estates run, expertly it is true, by companies controlled from abroad, there is always the danger that small discontents can be fanned into fury by skilled agitators. The reverse is true—where there is ownership there is responsibility and an interest in maintaining stability. Great encouragement has been given in recent years to small independent rice farmers. A Rice Development Company, partly financed by the Colonial Development Corporation, has been set up to provide technical advice and facilities for milling and marketing. The prospects are bright, since there is a large unsatisfied market overseas for the Colony's rice output. The sugar companies would welcome an increase in the number of independent cane growers in order to make greater use of their own cane-crushing factories. In short, it should be feasible, given capital and technical assistance, to encourage land settlement, possibly on the lines of the wonderfully successful Gezira Scheme in the Sudan.

It is here that we can help the Guianese most effectively. Admittedly we have yet to find the answers to many questions. On what scale should we attempt agricultural development of this kind? What is the proper economic size of holdings? What should be grown and what marketing arrangements should be devised? And how much capital will be required?

The answers must be found—and soon—for upon the success of our efforts to help the Guianese peasant master his difficult environment will depend the success of our constitutional experiment.

BERNARD BRAINE.

BERMUDA REVIVED

By DENYS SMITH

AFTER the uncompromising Soviet note of November 3 the revived Bermuda conference takes on an entirely different complexion from that of its postponed predecessor. Americans no longer fear, as they did last July, that it would be a wayside station on the road to a Big Four meeting with Malenkov, without prior evidence that the Russians would enter such a conference with any sincerity. It will instead have the important task of determining Western policy in face of Russia's refusal to engage in any type of conference, high, low or medium level, except on impossible conditions. It was, in Mr. Dulles's phrase, a demand that the West should "unconditionally surrender" all their existing plans and policies to gain the bare privilege of conferring. Britain, France and the United States by the very act of holding the Bermuda conference offer a concrete rejection of one of Russia's conditions for any conference, namely the end of what the Soviet note called "collusion of the three powers." This, the Soviet note asserted, was "contrary to the interests of international co-operation."

The Soviet note of November 3 also demonstrated how little basis there was for a popular European belief that Washington had been depriving the world of something valuable and hopeful by its failure to endorse the idea of a heads of government meeting between the Big Four. When Lord Salisbury came to Washington early this summer to discuss the question of probing the intentions of the new Russian regime, there were essentially two methods to adopt. One was to have a top-level

conference, the other (which was chosen) to probe the intentions of the new Russian rulers on matters of major policy by diplomatic exchanges. Suppose, Americans are now asking, that the method chosen had been that of a top-level conference. Then the Russian rebuff would have had a far more damaging effect on Western opinion than the same rebuff in the form of a note. If the Russian programme with its impossible demands was to be presented, it was much better that it should be presented in public documents than in secret discussions. The top-level conference would have broken up with nothing accomplished, but there would always have been some suspicion that the Western leaders had managed matters badly. They would later have given their own summaries of what had taken place and what the Soviet demands were, but these would not have had the same impact as an official Soviet document about which there could be no dispute and no controversial argument. If, on the other hand, an appearance of amiability had been given to the final communicate the peoples of the world would have been dangerously deceived. Nobody can now blame the West for the continued existence of world tensions and, Americans hope, no one can now blame the United States for its opposition to a top-level conference. The world should be grateful, instead, that it was saved from an experience which could only have been futile and might have been worse.

There was no ambiguity about the Russian note. It called for an end of talks between Britain, France and the United States, an end of the Western

BERMUDA REVIVED

security programme, including the E.D.C., N.A.T.O. and the Pacific Security pacts, an end of the arrangements for American bases in Europe, Asia and Africa. Before the Soviets will even discuss causes of tension the United States must recognize Communist China, help seat it in the United Nations, and allow it to participate in Big Five talks. The smaller powers have often shown the most concern over a supposed reluctance of the United States to negotiate, but they are treated with scant respect. The Western suggestion that, since other powers as well as the big powers were interested in some of the problems causing world tension, they should not be settled by the big powers alone, was ignored. If the three Western powers refuse to assume the role of shorn lambs and reject the Soviet demands, then they "increase the threat of a new world war." This was the kind of talk heard from another quarter in the late 'thirties.

Were the Soviets determined to make any East-West conference impossible they could not have phrased their note better. That may well have been their purpose. They want no conferences on foreign affairs, because they are still busy with domestic affairs and domestic troubles. There may still be a jockeying for power within the Kremlin. This leads to one little understood reason for the American objection to top-level discussions. While Sir Winston Churchill's knowledge and prestige in the foreign field are so great that no foreign policy question is likely to be settled without reference to him, the same is not true elsewhere. President Roosevelt assumed direct control of and responsibility for American foreign policy. He often over-ruled Mr. Hull and when Mr. Stettinius was appointed to succeed him it was common knowledge that

he was to act as a mere White House agent. President Truman also assumed direct responsibility for foreign policy, for example in the Middle East, though not to the same extent as President Roosevelt. But President Eisenhower believes far more than his two predecessors in delegating authority. He relies on Mr. Dulles as his foreign policy expert. If he went alone to any conference he would refer questions back to Mr. Dulles and would accept his recommendations. It may very well be true that the location of Russian foreign policy authority is not Malenkov but Molotov. The Russian Prime Minister has never been outside the Soviet Union. His experience has been in domestic affairs. While it is impossible to imagine an Eisenhower and a Dulles clique jockeying for position, with each leader reluctant to see the other engage in any conference which might enhance his personal prestige, such a possibility cannot be ruled out in Russia. The Kremlin may be opposed to a Foreign Ministers' conference or a top-level conference for the same reason. It would bring to the fore men whose nicely balanced authority within the Kremlin might thereby be upset.

It is concluded with ironic satisfaction in Washington that if the Russians had shown even an appearance of being conciliatory it would have been more difficult for the Western powers to continue that "collusion" to which Russia objects. There were and still are misunderstandings both between America and France and America and Britain. The Russian note has served to minimize them. American opinion has been exasperated at French reluctance to ratify the E.D.C. treaty. There have been impatient proposals that the United States should back direct Western German rearmament, the admission of West Germany to

N.A.T.O., or even that she should form a separate military alliance with her, as with Spain. The State Department has kept its head and been careful to do nothing which could be interpreted in France as external pressure, knowing that this would only strengthen the French Left. There are also differences between the French and American official views of the nature of the present emergency. American policy is still based on the belief that the threat of Soviet military aggression in Europe is real, while in France, and to some extent in Britain, the possibility of military invasion by the Red Army is held to be remote. The traditional problem and the traditional fear of a revived Germany, therefore, occupies a more prominent place in European than in American thinking. The American view will concede that the threat of invasion has diminished, but only because its success is now problematical, thanks to Western rearmament. Dissatisfaction among the Russian satellite population, which would mean that Russia's line of communications in any invasion would be insecure, is also considered to have helped. But to argue from this that there is no need to pay much attention to building up the means of resisting aggression is, in American eyes, like saying that successfully holding down crime in a formerly crime-ridden city means the police force which was doing this can be reduced. Finally there is American bewilderment that important segments of French opinion, for example *Le Monde*, should be advocates of "neutralism." It is hoped that the Russian note will convince even the most confirmed neutralist that America is not to blame for the failure to end world tensions.

The chief cause of Anglo-American misunderstanding is in the Far East.

It was considered significant that the Russians should have given so much space in their note to supporting the cause of Communist China. One purpose is obviously to bring China into world councils under Russian auspices and thus prevent any separate accommodation between China and the West. Another, equally obvious, is to hammer away at the Achilles heel of Western co-operation. For that reason a renewed effort may be anticipated at Bermuda to bring Western policy on the Far East into greater harmony. On the eve of the Bermuda conference announcement it was made known that the Eisenhower Administration was not unalterably opposed to establishing diplomatic relations with Communist China, nor did it claim to hold a veto over Peking membership in the United Nations General Assembly. Mr. Dulles made this clear at a press conference despite the political embarrassment which such a statement was bound to cause. He pointed out, however, that recognition or diplomatic dealings with the Peking regime were ruled out so long as it failed to liquidate its aggression in Korea, promoted aggression in Indo-China, and in general continued to act contrary to the obligations and principles of the United Nations Charter. This more flexible American attitude may make it easier to bring British and American Far Eastern policy into line. The Russian note showed that the Soviet Government has no wish to confer on European problems, but rather to maintain the *status quo*. No similar conclusion about maintaining the *status quo* was drawn about Communist policies in the Far East, which provides additional reason why the Western powers should agree among themselves.

After the war we had a period of

relentless Soviet outward pressure. After Stalin's death there was a brief "peace offensive" period, marked by a number of minor concrete gestures which cost the Russians little. Now, after the November note, we have a renewal of the Cold War in a slightly different form. There will be a Russian holding operation, with no withdrawals, but no major drives to expand the borders of Communism so far as

Europe is concerned. It is a difficult condition in which to live. When there are obvious threats, such as the guerilla war in Greece, the Czechoslovak *coup* or the Berlin blockade, it is easy to recognize them. A period of passive hostility demands vigilance lest the West drop its guard and invite a return to more active Cold War operations.

DENYS SMITH.

RAILWAY CONVERSATION PIECE. II

By HON. SIR EDWARD CADOGAN

(Continued from the November number)

"THANKS to your forbearance," the old man resumed, "I feel that I have been indulging in something in the nature of a soliloquy, but if you insist I am ready to comply with your request.

"When I left Oxford in company with two or three friends, all of us sons of wealthy or well-to-do parents, I resolved to occupy my spare time in making personal investigations as to how the working classes lived. I was swiftly drawn out of my self-complacency. What we observed filled us with righteous indignation. My experience embittered me with all Authority. I began to take an active part in attacking the existing economic and social systems. These proceedings on my part continued for some while. But a time was to come when I began to tire of the kind of intemperate and fatiguing speeches our working-men orators were delivering to sheepish audiences. So many of them seemed to be merely

cutting capers with as little purpose and result as those of a clown at a circus. I could never quite bring myself to believe that all landlords were bad and only tenants were virtuous. At any rate, it was up to us to suggest ways and means for curing the ills of state and, when I turned these matters over in my mind, I began to detect the fallacies in the remedies suggested by the more vehement of my political friends of those days. After my first enthusiasms had somewhat faded in the harsh light of reason I found myself confronted with the difficulty of translating my precepts into practice. What had been proclaimed so glibly did not seem to be quite so practicable when it had advanced only as far as the blue-print stage. I argued that a drastic social revolution, such as some of my companions had advocated in the small halls and at the street corners in the East End of London, could only be brought about in one of two ways.

Either by a sudden ruthless and complete reversal of the existing order, such as we have witnessed elsewhere during the last thirty years, or by the process which the Webbs defined as the inevitability of gradualness—a clumsy phrase, you will agree, but not unsuitable all the same. I objected to the first expedient because it invariably brings such unspeakable horrors in its train which are condoned if not instigated by its promoters. So many millions, innocent and guilty alike, suffer such undeserved hardship and tribulation by so comprehensive a disintegration of society that I find it difficult to believe that any good could come out of so much evil. Moreover it is noteworthy that this particular solution generally ends by substituting an even worse tyranny than that which it has displaced.

“As for building up the Socialist State by slow degrees, by the Fabian policy of delay, my objection to that expedient is that, for a long period of time, we should be living, as we are to-day, under a dual or hybrid system the ingredients of which we can never truly blend.

“And then there was the refusal of my Socialist companions to give any credit to the wisdom of our ancestors, much of which the Conservatives, very rightly in my view, still regard as a precious heritage. But what made me most impatient with them was their almost pathetic belief in panaceas. They genuinely believed that the so-called nationalization of industry and of everything else conceivable was the talisman which would cure overnight all the ills of state. In this and in other ways I discovered that the Labour Party was more conservative than the Conservative Party itself. The Socialist is the least adaptable of all our politicians. Slow to conceive new ideas, he is precipitate in putting his old ones into effect. He is incapable of disengaging

himself from his original infatuations, many of which have already been disproved or have become out of date and have no longer any relation to our present needs. I am taking nationalization as an example of what I am endeavouring to convey to you. It is irretrievably out of date—an anachronism.”

“Out of date,” exclaimed the youth in some astonishment.

“Yes, I repeat, out of date. Half a century ago I was entirely in favour of the state expropriation of industry and land from private ownership. When the agitation first commenced there was excellent reason for it. The degrading conditions under which the working classes lived—low wages, long hours, no redress of grievances—were certainly a very bad advertisement for private enterprise. Had these conditions endured I would still be in favour of state ownership. But this plea has no longer the smallest justification. The whole of the circumstances of the worker have completely altered. Thanks above all to the Trade Unions and, I hope, a more enlightened view of his responsibilities on the part of the private owner, there has been a remarkable amelioration in the lives of the working classes. The position seems to have been reversed. No more is the worker exploited by the employer. Sometimes I am disposed to believe that the worker, with his unofficial strikes and his perpetual rise in wages, is exploiting the employer, not to say the populace as a whole. What other plea then can be put forward in favour of so-called nationalization? Anybody who believes that Whitehall, with all its harassing delays and ineptitudes, is more competent to run industry than business men who have been concerned with it from their earliest years must be suffering from some kind of aberration. Our Civil Service within its own parti-

cular and appropriate sphere is and always has been a model institution of its kind. It has had a reputation for impartiality, for integrity, erudition and utility unrivalled. But it is little short of cruelty to burden it with functions it is in no way qualified to discharge, and for which it has had no practical training whatever. Have any of these transfers from private to state ownership justified themselves? The cost has been prohibitive and the waste proverbial while, as I have already indicated, any justification there ever was for the change has lapsed. And so I find myself at issue with the Labour Party on one of its main professions.

"But it was not only that state control seemed to me in the last degree irksome, with all its encroachments upon what few rights and privileges were still left to us, but that expenditure of the State had become so formidable as to neutralize the benefit which might otherwise have conceivably been bestowed upon us. In view of the origins of Socialism this recent and rapid ramification of the power of bureaucracy does not appear to be exactly what its founders anticipated, any more than "Liberty, Equality" etc. are in accordance with what has happened in France since the Revolution.

"True it is that the employee can no longer be exploited by an unrestricted employer. That, I admit, is all to the good. But most of us, not only the wage earners, are discovering that we are being exploited by the State with no means of redress, which could not have been the original concept of Socialism. For if control by the State is carried out to its logical conclusion there will be precious little difference between Socialism and Communism, although it is to be presumed that we should never here in England tolerate concentration camps and other barbarities witnessed in some countries of the

world to-day. That, however, is only a difference of method and not a difference of principle."

At this point in the old gentleman's discourse he was interrupted by a dining car attendant who came to inform us that the first luncheon was being served. With no very confident anticipation that our necessities would be satisfied with what we were about to receive, we all admitted that a change of environment would do us no harm and would serve as an interlude mildly welcome in the protracted discussions we had been engaged upon for at least three hours.

"The train meal has become a by-word," observed the old gentleman as he took his seat in the dining car and scrutinized the bill of fare, "but I don't know why we should especially single it out to demonstrate our inability in this country to master the elements of cooking. As an acrobatic feat alone, on the part of the railway staff, it should merit our applause. But there is plenty of other gruesome evidence on all sides of us to prove the case against English *cuisine*.

"But surely, sir, you must admit," the youth broke in, having been obviously very much on the defensive while this tirade against English cooking was in progress, "that our treatment of good plain roast holds its own against all the messed-up French dinners that were ever concocted."

"Messed-up dishes, did you say?" enquired the old gentleman with a reproachful accent. "Gainsborough messed up the paints on his palette, but the ultimate result of his artistic performance was exquisite."

As the attendant was handing the old gentleman some "fruit salad" I noticed that he looked dubiously at a sauce boat filled with custard.

"Custard," he murmured, "is the religion of the general public, now that

we have forsaken our earlier beliefs. Our cooks pour libations of it to their pagan gods over every dish and platter. It covers a multitude of their iniquities. The devotees of this cult regard the day mis-spent unless they absorb a given quantity of this curiously uninteresting liquid which to myself is neither one thing nor the other."

I was obliged to confess that the collation we had been partaking of in the dining saloon was a complete vindication of the old gentleman's views on English food and cooking, although he had stated his case with an almost brutal candour. I was relieved when the bill had been paid and we were able to pursue our tortuous way down the corridors back to our own compartment.

As we were settling down to a further period of this protracted journey the youth, who had shown commendable self-restraint and patience while his much older companion had been finding fault with the younger generation, appeared to be none the less anxious to encourage the veteran to continue his provocative observations on current affairs.

"There is one subject," he said, "on which, sir, I should like to elicit your views if you would be indulgent enough to acquaint us with them; namely, the merits or demerits of the Social Welfare State."

"The Social Welfare State," replied the old gentleman, nothing loath to resume his disquisitions, "is a novel phrase which includes much that is familiar to us. Many of the benefits of the National Health Act, for instance, were already enjoyed; those who were not able to afford it have for long been able to claim free medical attention. Much of the recent social legislation has been consolidating, rather than original, in character. Notwithstanding, many speak of this particular brand of government as if it was a recent dis-

covery, a novelty or even something peculiar to England, the Social Welfare State has actually been in operation to a greater or lesser extent, in some shape or another, since Tudor times, if not before. It has had a chequered career. During the so-called Industrial Revolution state assistance was unable to keep pace with, much less anticipate, the needs of the working classes, a situation created by the general dislocation of the labour market at the time, but in the later stages of the 19th century it made considerable progress and found advocates with every class and creed.

"It has sometimes been alleged that the Tories of the mid-Victorian era were opposed to social reform, an unwarrantable assumption which is not borne out by any reliable history. On the contrary, they condemned the *laissez-faire* school of the Lancashire industrialists of that day. You will admit, moreover, that few have been more enlightened champions of the Social Welfare State than Lord Shaftesbury and Lord Beaconsfield. In fact, Tory Democracy was called into being to combat social evils and to carry into effect constructive measures for improving the health and hygienic standards of our people, in both of which spheres it was eminently successful, much to Mr. Gladstone's mortification, who felt that in this matter he had been "dished" by his inveterate foe."

"I do not disagree with you on that account," said the youth, "but surely it was not in fact until the two World Wars completely upset the whole ordering of society in this country that politicians began ungrudgingly and resolutely to tackle the social evils in our midst?"

"I admit," replied the old gentleman, "that for various reasons, some obvious and others less so, the sphere of operations for the Social Welfare State was considerably widened and its work

RAILWAY CONVERSATION PIECE. II.

accelerated as a direct consequence of the two World Wars, and now it has become so firmly established and so immutable that whoever suggests making any change in its structure, however insignificant, is stigmatized as an anti-social reactionary—a rather deplorable circumstance in view of the fact that the present set-up of the Social Welfare State already needs a great deal of revision, and even here and there a radical alteration, if it is not to effect more harm than good. If, as some have said, including a prominent ex-Cabinet Minister, the slightest alteration will impair the whole fabric, all I can say is that it must be a very crazy and jerry-built edifice."

"You would not deny, of course, that under the peculiar circumstances in which we are living to-day a considerable measure of state control and interference is indispensable?" I asked him.

"I am in favour of state assistance for many occasions but I cannot join with those who protest that any description of state assistance, whatever our economic circumstances may be, and however much it may have failed in its purpose, is holy and inviolable, as if it had been consecrated upon some high altar. There is nothing sacrosanct about any of our human institutions. Most of them reveal grave defects the moment they come into operation.

"However, it looks as if the seal of public sanction has been set upon the Social Welfare State. Considerable dexterity has been exercised in vaunting its advantages, and in concealing its obligations. I cannot resist the suspicion that the majority of citizens who have accepted it with a greater or lesser degree of enthusiasm have not concerned themselves sufficiently with the ways and means by which such profligate state expenditure can be met, and that those who do understand have

hitherto consoled themselves with the reflection that the other fellow will have to pay."

"What you have said," I suggested, "is an interesting commentary upon the attempt being made to level society by the process of taxation. If society wants to be levelled we shall first have to learn to bear one another's burdens and not expect, as is now the custom, the other fellow to shoulder them for us."

"That is certainly not what the promoters of levelling by taxation ever intended," observed the old gentleman, "but that particular issue will be inevitable all the same.

"It seems to me very remarkable," he continued, "that even to-day, with all the millions we spend on education, a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these islands of ours are still so pitifully unsophisticated that they seem to cherish the illusion that the Treasury has a prodigious and inexhaustible accumulation of specie hidden away in the cellars. These deluded folk fail to appreciate that wealth distributed by the State in allowances, subsidies, pensions and every description of eleemosynary assistance is exclusively paid for with the proceeds of all kinds of taxation, customs and excise, every penny of which has to be reimbursed in varying degrees and varying ways by the great mass of ordinary citizens, whom the Socialists claim as their special care."

"The degrees are becoming less varying," I remarked, following up my recent observations on the subject, "as you level down, unlike the previous situation when only the rich paid—now we shall all have to make an increasingly level contribution."

"That is not quite what the selfish voter meant when he asked for equal opportunities, I presume," said the old gentleman with a wry smile. "Equal

opportunities for all to be equally fleeced"—shades of Rousseau!—put that way the proposition will not sound quite so enticing."

"Might it not be said," queried the youth who, although he had not spoken for a while, had followed the conversation attentively, "that it is not because the general public is so obtuse as to fail to understand this very elementary proposition, but because the general public believes that the State rather than the individual should have the disposal and distribution of the wealth of the nation?"

"That is as near a complete definition of Communism as I have yet been supplied with" observed the old gentleman playfully. "But, so far, the general public has turned down Communism with no uncertain voice, so I can hardly believe you are right. No, I am afraid it is just sheer ignorance."

After a short period of silence the old gentleman resumed his observations.

"There is another consideration," he said. "The Social Welfare State, good as it is in parts, is subject to grave abuse in the hands of unscrupulous politicians, well calculated to demoralize the ignorant. It can be used shamelessly as a very effective resource in the highly charged atmosphere of a General Election, when presumably the average citizen does not have the time to exercise his critical faculties or to give due reflection as to what he hears on the hustings, and thus is in a frame of mind to be easily hoodwinked. It is simple enough for those who seek with a feigned solicitude for the welfare of the public, to gain a party advantage by promising a bigger and a better Social Welfare State and to impose upon wishful thinkers in this discreditable fashion."

"In my view," I interjected, "this particular form of corruption is even more culpable than that which prevailed

in the time of Sir Robert Walpole. Our forefathers indulged freely in distributing monetary bribes, but at least it was bribery with their own resources not with those of other people.

"Moreover, these benefits doled out to those who have failed to deserve them or to those who do not need them must be very disheartening to the energetic and diligent worker who ungrudgingly and unremittingly gives his services *pro bono publico*. I, for my part, am in favour of giving him every encouragement and incentive while the Social Welfare State seems to leave him out of account altogether in its haste to disburse a prodigal and indiscriminate charity."

"I agree," said the old gentleman. "However, subject to the reservations I have endeavoured to explain to you, I gladly bear my share of the rates and taxes which I am compelled to pay in so far as they assist the young, the old, the disabled, those unemployed through no fault of their own, the physical or mental invalid and other victims of misfortune, the provision of essential services—education, housing and defence, to mention only a few. These items alone account for a prodigious expenditure, as much as we can bear without wasting our resources on the undeserving and those quite capable of looking after themselves—always bearing in mind that there is, without doubt, a limit to national expenditure and that when the limit is reached we are in the danger zone.

"Finally, allow me to summarize my own prejudices. I do not want the State to protect me against myself. I find it somewhat aggravating that, although the State has taken away from me nearly everything which could enable me to order my own life adequately, it has become the exasperating habit for officials in Whitehall to constitute themselves the guardians of

RAILWAY CONVERSATION PIECE. II

my morals and my way of life. The State is much too solicitous for my welfare—I feel it does not really know what is good for me. I would prefer less of its assistance and more of my individual freedom. It impresses upon me that I am getting something for nothing, but I do not happen to want anything for nothing. I have always tried—I may not always have succeeded—to deserve what I get, and I believe all decent-minded citizens, if only the State would leave them more to their own devices, would, on due reflection, be of the same mind as I am and would infinitely prefer to be self-supporting than to become mere pensioners of the State.”

For the rest of the journey our conversation ranged over a variety of subjects too disjointed to be worthy of record, until it became obvious that we were approaching our destination. An ever increasing number of lights, which asserted themselves in the gathering darkness outside, betokened the suburbs of a great city. There was a general spirit of restlessness among the passengers up and down the corridors and in the carriages of our train which is usually prevalent near the journey's end. The old gentleman seized upon what scant opportunity yet remained for addressing a few valedictory words to his companion.

“I am afraid I have given you my opinions too freely,” he said, “which must seem to you to be prejudiced by the caution and restraint of old age.

My participation in public affairs has ceased. I must rest content to play the role of Chiron—I hope you can appreciate the classical allusion—with the heroes of your generation—to be their mentor as far as I am competent to be so and then to wave them my blessing and farewell as they set out upon life's adventure.”

“I accept your blessing with fervent gratitude” replied the youth with some feeling. “But you must not expect too much of me—the heroic standard set by Chiron's pupils, Achilles, Jason, Æsculapius and the rest of them are too exacting for my limited capacities. But it is enough for me that you seem to repose some confidence in my generation.”

After my travelling companions had exchanged a hearty handshake the old gentleman arose and proceeded out into the corridor. Before bidding farewell to the youth I ventured to ask him for his name. By way of response to my question he turned the label of his attache case towards me. He was a scion of one of the oldest of our patrician families. We parted with mutual hopes that we should meet again. Once out of the compartment I had expected to exchange civilities with the old gentleman but although I ranged up and down the platform imperilling my chances of catching a connection further north and although I scanned every countenance in that wrestling struggling crowd he was nowhere to be seen.

EDWARD CADOGAN.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

LAST month we published an extract from "Some Early Impressions—Journalism," by Leslie Stephen. The same author contributed a second article—"Some Early Impressions—Editing"—to the next number of *The National Review* (December, 1903). Here is an extract :

In 1871 I became editor of the Cornhill Magazine. . . . The brilliant youth of the periodical was over ; it had rivals, and as we kept pretty much to our traditions, we did not dazzle the world by any new sensation. I found the duties pleasant enough. My great predecessor, Thackeray, has left a record of the "thorns in his cushion." His kindly and sensitive nature suffered from the necessity of rejecting would-be contributors who had no other qualification than pressing need for remuneration. No man indeed, who is not a brute, can fail to be pained by some of the facts that come to his notice—the struggles of the waifs and strays who are trying to keep themselves afloat by such very inadequate lifebuoys as unsaleable articles. I could comfort myself sufficiently by a very simple consideration. I had only a fixed number of pages at my disposal, and to accept one writer was therefore to reject another. It was clearly my duty to take the best article offered, and not to distribute charity at the cost of the magazine and its proprietor. In other respects I had no cause for complaining of my contributors. They were (except, of course, the poets) more reasonable than I expected. . . . Gladstone, in the midst of his multitudinous occupations, found time to read minor poets and to applaud them with characteristic warmth. One or two of these came to me with heads turned by such praises, and thought me painfully cold in comparison. I might have reminded them of Blackwood's very sensible remark, when Lewes complained of strictures upon George

Eliot's first story, that critics who had to act upon their judgment were naturally more guarded than irresponsible eulogists who need only consult their good nature.

An editor, though authors sometimes forget the fact, is always in a state of eagerness for the discovery of the coming man (or woman). In spite of many disappointments, I would take up manuscript after manuscript with a vague flutter of hope that it might be a new *Jane Eyre* or *Scenes of Clerical Life*, destined to lift some obscure name to the heights of celebrity. That delight never presented itself ; and yet I do not know that I ever rejected an angel unawares. Had I done so, I should only have been treading in the steps of men more sagacious in gauging aptitude for success. I do not fancy myself to be a good judge of the public taste. I have never clearly discovered what it is that attracts the average reader. Many popular authors would suffer considerably, and at least one obscure writer would gain, if everybody took my view of their merits. I believe not the less in the *vox populi*. Books succeed, I hold, because they ought to succeed. A critic has no business to assume that taste is bad because he does not share it. His business is to accept the fact and try to discover the qualities to which it is due. Sometimes, of course, an ephemeral success may be won by rubbish ; the preacher may please the audience, as Charles II. shrewdly observed, because his nonsense suits their nonsense ; but it is idle to condemn lasting popularity. It is too late to set down Shakespeare as simply barbarous ; though I admit that it is tempting to try to clear away some of the stupendous rubbish-heaps of eulogy which accumulate over the great men when admiration has become obligatory on pain of literary renunciation. Even blasphemy in such cases is better than idolatry.

BOOKS NEW AND OLD

A PERFECT AUTOBIOGRAPHY *

By LORD ALTRINCHAM

AMONG many gifts, Lord Norwich has none more distinguished than that of style. He can no more write an ungainly sentence than our 18th-century architects could plan an ill-proportioned house. His prose is also delightful to read because, like Jane Austen's, its ease and limpidity are shot with strands of eloquence or quiet irony which have you moved or laughing almost unaware. Here, for instance, is an account of an unexpected visit by Evelyn Waugh and Randolph Churchill to Algiers. Their plane had crashed on its way to drop them in Yugoslavia :

Evelyn had been severely burned and Randolph, when he reached us, had water on both knees. He was, however, in high spirits and he gave Monsieur Vincent Auriol at luncheon one day a short lecture on French political and constitutional problems which the future President of the Republic seemed to enjoy.

Jane Austen could not be more sly ! But apart from such touches and two or three disparaging references to Lloyd George (whom Lord Norwich never knew) there is not a suggestion of malice in the book. Outspoken as it is about individuals and events, it is a model of fairness and generosity.

Here, then, is a perfect autobiography with diary and text woven into a tapestry of rich colour and extraordinarily varied interest, from which it is most difficult to select. One of its outstanding virtues is that Lord Norwich knows when to skip ; he drops months at a time when they are dull

and never troubles about continuity unless events are significant. There is indeed one remarkable gap which I must mention ; but the narrative flows swimmingly and only halts for detail when detail is of vital historical or artistic interest.

Of the whole story, which ends in 1947, two sections impressed me most deeply. One was the intensely real and personal account of the brilliant Edwardian world which gave the most gifted of its youth to the holocaust of 1914-15—Raymond Asquith, the Grenfell brothers, John Manners, Patrick Shaw-Stewart, and many more. I missed only one name, that of Charlie Mills ; others, no doubt, will have more to add. But as a record of the period, alive with the vivid personalities which make it unforgettable, this has no equal and it will stand as an exposition which no historian can overlook.

The other main period is that of the growing German menace in the 'thirties, when British policy was first profoundly influenced and then completely dominated by a leader acting in a role for which he was totally unfit. Like Lord Norwich, I had a personal regard for Neville Chamberlain which survived and will always survive my estimation of his disastrous faults ; but I had no idea to what extent he acted as a dictator without reference to his Cabinet colleagues at many critical points. This revelation explains some personal experiences of my own at the time, as a friend whose opinion he sometimes

* *Old Men Forget*, by Duff Cooper (Viscount Norwich). Rupert Hart-Davis. 21s.

sought but always ignored—experiences which have hitherto bewildered me. It seems hardly credible that Chamberlain should have used the Italian Ambassador, Signor Grandi, to help force the resignation of Mr. Eden, his chief colleague, in 1937. But such is the fact; Lord Norwich is convinced of it now, though he knew nothing of it at the time. Equally unbelievable is it that Chamberlain rejected outright an offer from President Roosevelt in 1937 to co-operate in restraining Hitler without consulting either the Foreign Office (Mr. Eden was then abroad) or a single member of his Cabinet. But most astounding of all is the statement that he sent his telegram offering to go to Munich entirely behind the Cabinet's back. There was at the time a highly sychophantic "inner Cabinet," from which the Service Ministers were excluded; but even this, it seems, was kept completely in the dark. All this is history with a vengeance. It is told with absolute correctness from full diaries kept at the time. No official records are quoted; but it is impossible to question the accuracy of the story, which is quite enough in itself to ensure the immortality, as human history goes, of Lord Norwich's book.

But I have referred to one curious gap—a gap in the political record which does not impair the book's perfection as a work of art. I was thinking of the formation of the National Government (so-called) in 1931. Lord Norwich was then M.P. for the St. George's Division and very much in the thick of things, but he has nothing of interest to say about the how or the why of that ill-omened Coalition. This is all the more remarkable because (like England) he is against Coalitions in principle, and not only very freely denounces that of 1918, but wrote to *The Times* on December 3, 1930, making mincemeat of a previous letter

from the then Jack Seely (afterwards Lord Mottistone) calling for another one. This admirable protest is not reproduced in the autobiography, but I agreed with it so wholeheartedly at the time that I have never forgotten it. Here is the last paragraph:

To-day, it might be argued, all parties desire the welfare of the country, which we hope is always the case, but as to the best method of securing that welfare there is a fundamental cleavage of opinion. The Labour Party say that they believe in Socialism; the Conservative Party insist upon the necessity of some measure of protection; the Liberals are concerned to prevent either of the other parties from putting their principles into practice. The Liberals apparently believe in first paralysing a Government and then keeping it in office; and in a Coalition they would at least have the satisfaction of being able to paralyse two parties at the same time. What is needed to-day is a party with an independent majority and a policy in which they believe. It is more than probable that a General Election would produce such a situation.

Irreverent voices within the Conservative Party have recently been raised in complaint of what they describe as the Old Gang. Whatever we may think of such criticism, surely a combination of the three Old Gangs is an evil from which we should all pray to be delivered.

I did not myself write to *The Times*, but I wrote more than once during the next six or seven months to Mr. Baldwin begging him to refuse absorption in a Coalition with the Socialists and to face the financial crisis and the country with the old war-time Coalition of Conservatives and National Liberals. He seemed to agree about this wholeheartedly, but changed his mind suddenly when told (as I believe) that the National Government was necessary to save the Gold Standard.

It was a disastrous decision, though

A PERFECT AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the National Government swept the country, because the pound sterling was not saved, the Conservative Party lost much heart, and an embittered Socialist rump was left to form the only alternative Government when, in due course, the Coalition had lost its hold on the electorate. Another grave flaw in the National Government, as formed, was that it excluded Lloyd George and Churchill—the two most dynamic political personalities of the age. If that Coalition had not been formed, I believe that the war would have been avoided, and also the eclipse of the Conservative Party which followed it. If this be true, it presents a warning worth remembering against peace-time Coalitions.

Lord Norwich does not share my faith in Lloyd George—he does not know how effectively he dealt between 1918 and 1922 with the Labour ferment which came to a head in 1926—and it is true that both he and Churchill had blotted their copybooks at that period. Baldwin, however, assured me that he was willing to bring Lloyd George into the Government, but that Neville Chamberlain was adamant against it. The same may have been true of Chamberlain's attitude to Churchill. Lord Norwich has no illusions about the evils of a Coalition which destroys the real conflict of parties in Parliament. Why, then, did he not stick to his guns on that issue of principle in 1931? It was very unlike him to knuckle under.

Another omission might be noted—the almost total failure to mention unemployment—except that Lord Norwich by implication explains and apologizes for this in advance, when he says that he has no grasp of political economy. It must be admitted that Lord Norwich's great talents were better suited to foreign than to domestic affairs, and we may share his own regret

that he was never given a chance to serve, as a Minister, at the Foreign Office. But it should not be thought that he was a "reactionary" in home politics; on the contrary, he has always been convinced of the necessity for social reform. His universe, if limited, is a rich and noble one, resembling that in which moved the great aristocrats of the 18th and early 19th centuries, who look down on us with such placid superiority from the canvases of Lawrence and Gainsborough. Lord Norwich would have been completely at home in that aristocratic universe. He tells us, indeed, that in his Eton days he took Charles James Fox as a model, and he has really managed to live his life within the narrow but affluent and polished circle which the 18th century would have called good company. It follows that France is the only country but his own which holds his devotion. He can admire the United States and the Commonwealth, but England and France share his heart between them. That is the main burden of the political testament which readers will find in his last two chapters.

There is much else in the book of absorbing interest—not least the detailed and entirely candid account of the relations between Churchill and de Gaulle; the puerilities of great men have never been more graphically recorded. What charms me most about it, however, is that at every serious turn it is the life-story not of one person but of two, who make together one of the most contrasted but closest partnerships which has ever delighted a world of friends and fervent admirers. Diana Manners, who made an unorthodox marriage of true love to become Diana Cooper, is of no class and no century; for her blue eyes, her exquisite face and her utter contempt for all conventions, combined with her warm and uninhibited humanity, would make her

welcome and at home in any age and any company. She is, and has always been, a "lass unparallel'd."

Finally I must, as a brother-Grenadier, pay tribute to Lord Norwich's war diaries. Being held at the Foreign Office till near the end of the First World War, he had only six months of active service; but I have read nothing which so vividly reproduces the conditions of trench warfare in France for battalion officers in the static periods. Operations and later the war of movement made generally for conditions of leanness and dryness—especially when divisional rations had to be shared with French refugees in German-occupied France immediately before and after the Armistice. But in the Guards Division supply for trench warfare was well organized, and Lord Norwich puts his experience of this in his own Jane-Austenish and ironical way. Here is a bit of his diary:

Quite good soup, hot fish tasting like sardines but larger—no one knew what they were—cold beef, pickles and pease, prunes and custard—plenty of whisky and port.

This is certainly not bad for a front-line dug-out, and Lord Norwich sums up his reactions to his first tour of front-line duty as follows:

We had a good deal of excitement at night and were often severely shelled. I was glad to find that I was no more frightened than other people—and I really think rather less so—especially, I must confess, after dinner.

But these Lucullan periods were unhappily ephemeral, and the really invaluable part of Lord Norwich's war diary is his description (reminiscent of *La Chartreuse de Parme*) of the battle

of August 20, 1918, fought in an impenetrable ground fog, in which he served as a platoon officer and won a well-merited D.S.O. It was an extraordinary performance, for while on the asset side he had great bravery and natural powers of leadership, on the other he lacked, as he says himself, all natural sense of direction. Yet in that unexampled muddle, during the most part of which neither landmarks nor friend as against foe were distinguishable, he was the only platoon officer in two highly trained battalions to reach his objective and then to throw out a defensive flank with fine tactical instinct and equal gallantry. I remember it well, because I had to try to reconnoitre and sort out the muddle next morning. I was G.S.O.1 of the Division at the time and remember the awful tangle which had to be adjusted. Fortunately the Germans, as so often happens in war, appeared to be even more bewildered than we were.

It was the habit of the Guards Division to tone down recommendations for honours from brigades and battalions on the ground that the hero in question had really done no more than was to be expected of a member of his Regiment. It was a tough system and never seemed to me quite fair as compared with general Army practice; but the recommendation of 2nd Lieutenant Duff Cooper went through without question, because his achievement was beyond cavil and quite outstanding. Late as he came to it, the Foreign Office clerk had in every truth made good in war as he afterwards did, with the same courage, in politics, and as he has done in literature, never more completely than in telling his own romantic story.

ALTRINCHAM.

A CHRISTMAS LIST *

By ERIC GILLET

"TO suit all tastes," as the advertisements used bravely to promise, is impossible, even in a long review of recent books, though November has provided a splendid variety. Here are notable poetry, good prose, unconventional history, appetising biography, thrilling true stories, and a wide selection for the travel-minded. Not everything, certainly, but enough for any reader who can give his mind to a book and earn a reward for so doing.

Poetry is one of our national glories, or was, until the cryptographic mysteries of the 'thirties and 'forties warned right-minded people off it. Since then the tide has turned. Melody is coming back. Form and style dare to raise their heads again. Sense begins to smile once more. It is right that this selection should be headed by the name of our oldest, most distinguished, and loveliest writer among living poets. In the Note to *O Lovely England* Mr. Walter de la Mare apologises for including no tribute to the "Queen of 1953." He has no other reason for regret. In this sheaf of poems written over fifty years there is not a page which does not show his scrupulous craftsmanship, his unerring ear for the music of remote and beautiful things, his gift for passing on memories and experiences too slender for any other to capture and communicate. The old enchantment prevails, even when it has to reckon with a wireless tenor trolling "When Other Lips." "For a Child" is one of the perfect things that only Mr. de la Mare could have written.

Dr. Edith Sitwell speaks for a younger generation and she, too, can

strike melody from an age of strange anthropoids and atoms. *Gardeners and Astronomers* is written in the grand manner. The poet reveals a world of her own, a richly coloured universe of greens and golds, where the eternal verities are the only things that matter. The "little man" has no place here and it is a pleasure to be without him and his dreary, materialistic needs. Dr. Sitwell has a tigress muse. Tooth and claw are at work here. She will not admit the faint or the pusillanimous. The result is, naturally, a fierce perfection with beauty in full possession. The craftsmanship is here, but it is never apparent. It seems to me that *Gardeners and Astronomers* contains the author's most notable work in poetry. It is a book of extraordinary excitement and charm.

Mr. Hugh Mackintosh chooses to work in a more formal garden. *Ballades and Other Verse* is his first book, but his name has been known for

* *O Lovely England*. By Walter de la Mare. Faber & Faber. 10s. 6d.

Gardeners and Astronomers. By Edith Sitwell. Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

Ballades and Other Verse. By H. S. Mackintosh. Hart-Davis. 10s. 6d.

The Reason Why. By Cecil Woodham-Smith. Constable. 15s.

A Writer's Diary. By Virginia Woolf. Hogarth Press. 18s.

The Golden Echo. By David Garnett. Chatto & Windus. 21s.

The Indomitable Mrs. Trollope. By Eileen Bigland. Barrie. 15s.

The Stronghold. By Xan Fielding. Secker & Warburg. 21s.

The Silent Traveller in Dublin. By Chiang Yee. Methuen. 21s.

Duel of Wits. By Peter Churchill. Hodder & Stoughton. 12s. 6d.

The Latter Days. By P. R. Reid. Hodder & Stoughton. 15s.

Hunting Scenes from Surtees. Selected by Lionel Gough. Hart-Davis. 12s. 6d.

years to lovers of the Ballade, and I do not think that there is a living writer, except Sir John Squire, who can compete with him in it with any hope of success. This is a work of high accomplishment, wit, and great metrical proficiency. It is also a delight to read, if taken in suitable doses. One Ballade a day read, let us say, after dinner, would be an admirable and stimulating digestive. They must be rationed if one is to achieve the proper mood of appreciation. These Ballades deserve it. They are immensely quotable; but there is only room here for the opening stanza of the "Ballade inspired by the Grumbling of Mr. Hilaire Belloc":

There is an inn at Bonn which God has
blest

With terraced gardens falling to the
Rhine,

And leafy arbours, where I sat at rest
And drank that fruit of Heaven-
planted vine—

Good Liebfraumilch; I watched the
sun decline

Towards the golden river and was glad,
For in that haven plenitude was mine,
But Mr. Belloc says the food is bad.

Ballades and Other Verse is in every sense a polished, entertaining and elegant production. The publisher may be congratulated on the format.

Mrs. Cecil Woodham-Smith burst upon an acclaiming world with her *Florence Nightingale*, which left me wondering a little where she would turn next. The material for her new book must have been almost at her elbow and she has made excellent use of it, although I am not sure that her acute and fascinating detective work into the flamboyant and quarrel-ridden lives of George Bingham, Earl of Lucan, and James Brudenell, Earl of Cardigan, has provided the reader with an answer to the extraordinary circumstances leading to the disaster of

the famous charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava. It is not even particularly important that it should do so, because *The Reason Why* is a picture of the remarkable conditions of influence and patronage which led to peculiar square pegs being inserted into wildly unsuitable round holes.

In *Florence Nightingale* Mrs. Woodham-Smith proved her mastery over vast masses of facts and statistics. In *The Reason Why* the narrative has to run upon alternate lines until the protagonists meet as fellow commanders under the curious direction of Lord Raglan. If Cardigan had been born a decade or so later he might have walked straight out of an Ouida novel. A cavalry general, living in his luxurious yacht, who could lead the lamentable charge as he did, ride back through the enemy lines to safety, and almost immediately return to his billet for a hot bath followed by an excellent dinner and lashings of champagne, cries out for Hollywood treatment on the widest possible screen. Cardigan and Lucan lived technicoloured lives. Without exaggeration or distortion Mrs. Woodham-Smith allows us to see them as they were. I do not agree that she has "provided the key to a fantastic tale", as her publisher claims. That mystery lies buried with Airey and the unhappy messenger, Captain Nolan, and the solution is only of academic importance now. The virtue of this most enjoyable book is its vivid re-creation of one phase of the Victorian scene. In this respect it could hardly be bettered.

I cannot pretend that I was ever an ardent admirer of Virginia Woolf's fiction, although I had no doubts about her artistic integrity. *A Room of One's Own* and the essays have always seemed to me to be the crown of her exquisite talent. The sense of strain which I find in all the novels,

A CHRISTMAS LIST

except the posthumous *Between the Acts*, spoiled my enjoyment, but I have been fascinated by *A Writer's Diary*, extracts from the journals from 1915 to 1941, compiled by Mr. Leonard Woolf. These pieces deal with Mrs. Woolf's own work and problems, and also with the group of writers and artists she knew. It has been most judiciously done. If ever the full diary is published in many years' time, it may well prove to be one of the most remarkable works in English. As it appears now it presents a picture of a writer desperately anxious to do justice to her powers, tirelessly writing and re-writing, agonizing, having second, third, fourth, and even fifth thoughts, polishing, stripping and compressing, and always striving to attain the ultimate perfection. Page after page exhibits beautiful and wise writing. There is a magnificent description of the eclipse of 1927, shrewd sketches of friends and fellow writers. Hardy, Bennett, Lady Oxford and Lytton Strachey are only a few of the people hit off here with delicate, witty observation. Rodmell, with its downs and marshes, is never out of the picture for long. I found *A Writer's Diary* more compelling and rewarding than anything else I have read by its writer.

Since *Lady Into Fox* startled the reading public Mr. David Garnett has not been prodigal of output. *The Golden Echo*, first volume of a three-book autobiography, is his only book since the war. It takes him from 1892 to 1914 and it offers a frank account of the child of distinguished and unconventional parents, who never had much money, gave their child much more liberty than was usual at that time, and presented him with splendid opportunities for meeting interesting people and travelling when he wanted to do so. There can have been few

parents as agreeable as Mrs. Garnett. Her son had only to tell her that he wanted to galavant to Russia because he liked the look of a girl there, and she produced the money for the trip without a murmur. Edward Garnett I knew very slightly. There can never have been a publisher's literary adviser more discerning or more popular with the authors he sponsored. He had a genius for discovery, and some of his most eminent "finds" became his son's friends. Conrad, Galsworthy, W. H. Hudson, and D. H. Lawrence all figure attractively, and there is the most natural, unstudied and human account of Rupert Brooke I have ever read. In his youth Mr. Garnett seems to have been a curious mixture of adventure and timidity. His self-portrait carries the stamp of truth, and the account of his determined attempt to liberate an Indian nationalist from Brixton Gaol is objective in the extreme. *The Golden Echo* offers an interesting comparison with Mr. Siegfried Sassoon's autobiographical chronicle covering the same period. The next instalment, dealing with the "Bloomsbury set," can be anticipated with some impatience.

After her high jinks at the expense of Marie Corelli, Mrs. Eileen Bigland must have found *The Indomitable Mrs. Trollope* a less exhilarating subject, but also one very well worth capturing. Like her better-known son and Sir Walter Scott, Frances Trollope was a "before breakfast" writer. She had terrific energy and she needed it in order to cope with her difficult husband, her sick children, and her generous burden of troubles. Rising at five, she did her writing before getting down to the day's domestic work. She was fifty-two when she wrote her first book, the explosive *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, and before she died thirty-one years later she

published forty other books, mostly novels. Her most unexpected venture was the disastrous Trollope Bazaar in Cincinnati. Mrs. Bigland can be relied upon to give a very lively account of such a character, but she might have been a little less sparing with her dates. *The Indomitable Mrs. Trollope* can safely be recommended to all good Trollopians. It may even provide them with forty-one more books to read before the limelight is switched upon the other novelist of the family, Thomas Adolphus, as it inevitably will be.

Crete has had its share of attention in recent war literature. Mr. Xan Fielding figured in some of these books but has not written about the island until now. *The Stronghold* is not a war book. The author calls it an account of the four seasons in the White Mountains and no better book about this part of the world has been written. Exactly ten years after he first glimpsed Crete in 1942, through the periscope of a submarine, Mr. Fielding returned there to be greeted with great enthusiasm by his former comrades and feted most dangerously by them. His troubles at a non-stop banquet of goat are reported more feelingly than any other episode. *The Stronghold* is valuable because it takes the reader into the minds and way of life of a little known people. How different from our own these are may be judged from the fact that some Cretans thought that Mr. Fielding had returned to prepare them for the next war. Civilization as we know it has little to do with these people. Their vendettas, love potions, and other practices unusual to-day, combined with the author's obvious affection and considerable ability to do justice to his friends, blend into a most sympathetic and valuable book. *The Stronghold* is one of the very best of the travel books

to be published in an unusually good year.

Chiang Yee is a traveller-writer-artist who specializes in much cosier corners than Crete. *The Silent Traveller in Dublin* is his latest addition to a growing series and it is one of the very best of them. Mr. Chiang, like many of his race, is a very good mixer. He believes that there is a limit to life but no limit to knowledge and experience. His paintings and drawings and his placid prose easily accommodate the twinkle of wit which often slights their surface. There is some kind of resemblance between his books and those of Mr. Robert Gibbings. Both are resourceful as Mr. Chiang showed when, being asked to shake the withered hand of the crusader lying in his coffin in St. Michan's vaults, he recollected the national custom of shaking hands with oneself. He did so to the gratification of all the Irish lookers on. It is a pleasant experience to view Dublin through Chinese eyes. The illustrations are as gentle and enlightening as the text.

It may be only imagination but I have an idea that Mr. Peter Churchill's *Duel of Wits* is a little less forthright than his excellent *Of Their Own Choice*. The material is as exciting and readable as that in the earlier book, and the narrative takes in the chain of events which culminated in the betrayal of the author and Odette and their capture by the Germans. The book ends in the guard room cells of the barracks at Annecy with long months of German bullying ahead of them.

Every fresh instalment of reminiscences by the secret agents of the war adds to the tale of the dangers and hazards, and of the enduring discomforts, these people had to suffer. Worst of all was the continuing fear of betrayal. On one festive occasion a genial Frenchman gave away

A CHRISTMAS LIST

Churchill's name, the most hated name of all in German ears, to a roomful of his countrymen at a time when it was dangerous to trust anyone. *Duel of Wits* is a modest report of almost incredible bravery. I hope that the author will complete his story in another book, though it may be one of almost unrelieved endurance. Mr. P. R. Reid's *The Latter Days* is also a sequel. This carries on the tale begun in *The Colditz Story*. Colditz was the German prison-fortress where only confirmed escapers were confined and in his first book the author told what was, perhaps, the most exciting escape story of all. As the years dragged on and officers of all nationalities found themselves inside the walls of Colditz, the problems put to the Escape Officers of the different nationalities became more and more involved.

The Latter Days is not concerned with its author's adventures. He had escaped already and was safe in Switzerland when most of the events narrated here took place. With the aid of officers still inside Colditz at that time Mr. Reid has assembled a first collection of attempts, successful and otherwise, to get out of the dreary fortress. Some of these tales are masterly, and it seems that there are still enough of them unprinted to make yet another volume. The story of the ingenious Mike Sinclair, who impersonated a German sergeant in charge of a guard and very nearly deceived the Goons—he would have done if it had not been for calamitous luck—is my own favourite, but almost all these episodes are thrilling or entertaining. It was a pleasure to travel with Wally and Tubby on their neatly planned journey to Switzerland. If you read *The Colditz Story* you will need no recommendation from me to return there. Not the least significant thing

is a letter from a German interpreter to the author. This shows clearly enough that the remedies adopted by the prisoners were the only ones likely to impress their captors and keep bullying within bounds. Herr Pfeiffer refers to the English officers as "your friends the enemy." I am afraid that no one who suffered in Colditz would find it easy to return that compliment.

I became a Surtees addict this week. Up to that time I could have asked with Arnold Bennett: "Can he . . . really be perused?" Now, after enjoying *Hunting Scenes from Surtees*, judiciously selected by Mr. Lionel Gough, with a charming introduction by Mr. Siegfried Sassoon, I have no doubt that for most people Surtees is more appealing in small slices, and I propose to devour one a night for some weeks to come. Not, of course, on Christmas Eve, when I invariably read *A Christmas Carol*.

ERIC GILLET.

THE WINTER QUEEN

THE LETTERS OF ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF BOHEMIA. Compiled by L. M. Barker. With an Introduction by C. V. Wedgwood. *The Bodley Head*. 30s.

I HAVE sometimes wondered what it was about James I's daughter, Elizabeth—best known as the Winter Queen, or the Queen of Hearts—that made so many gallant gentlemen wish to serve her. The poets rage about her and she elicited the tribute of Sir Henry Wotton's celebrated poem, "You meaner beauties of the night." Now, after reading her letters, I know. Of course she had the advantage of being a princess, and she was an unfortunate one—which always has an appeal to those who do not much enjoy the good fortune of others. But now one sees that in addition she had a charming good nature, unquenchable vivacity and spirit;

she was intelligent and generous, wise and good. One notices in her portraits a distinct resemblance to her grandmother, Mary Queen of Scots; she has her courage and vitality—but how much wiser and more sensible!

Elizabeth was married to Frederick, the Elector Palatine, who was pushed by his councillors into (wrongly) accepting the offer of the crown of Bohemia. That touched off the Thirty Years' War. Frederick and Elizabeth spent one winter in Prague, and then were driven not only out of Bohemia but out of their own Palatinate. Most of the rest of her life Elizabeth spent at the hospitable Hague, where the Dutch States were generous to her and largely supported her and her little court, companionable and cheerful in spite of all misfortunes. Calamities thickened: her husband (they were lovers always) died young, her eldest boy was drowned, her brother, Charles I, was executed, her next son and heir was unkind and mean to her. (Perhaps she was, like the Stuarts, inclined to extravagance; but at times it looked as if she would be out of beer, bread and candles—"Next week, for aught I know, I shall neither eat bread nor flesh, nor candles.")

These letters make a very pleasant and agreeable book and it has its historical value. It owes its inspiration to Miss C. V. Wedgwood, whose accomplished hand contributes a judicious and appealing portrait of Elizabeth as one of those "very few characters in history whose persistent vitality has little or nothing to do with what they did: we are fascinated by them for what they were. They appeal essentially to the heart rather than the mind; they call forth sentiments of chivalry and devotion; they awaken pictures of a beauty, or a grace, or a nobility outside common experience. Dead, they can still do that to some at least of the living; when they were alive they had the same effect on their contemporaries."

We can see this charm reflected in Elizabeth's letters: generously giving her ruby buttons away to a faithful lady-in-waiting when she had nothing else to give; ragging her devoted "honest Tom"

—the diplomat Sir Thomas Roe—her "honest fat body," "pert bulk," etc., doing her best for everybody, trying to heal breaches, advising the difficult Vane to think of an enemy's many good points—"I pray make the best of all, and remember his good actions, and forget his words." She has an immediate sense of life which is always appealing: a favourite dog, Apollo, leaps into her lap and she makes a great blot on the paper; outside in the January cold "they make such a noise with their bells and pleids in the street as makes me end." From home arrives news that his precious highness, Cromwell, is to be made King or Emperor; Elizabeth hopes Emperor; and then, that "his coach horses ran away with him the other day but his master the Devil saved him from harm only a little bruised and a black eye, the old rascal did drive himself and fell off the coach box, I hope it is a good omen." It was. As the Restoration of her nephew approaches, the letters take on a real excitement and render the atmosphere of the time *à merveille*, with the sailors bringing the King over, shouting, "We have him, we have him. God bless King Charles!"

The book is so good that it merits an index and some notes to instruct us about various characters and events. But where, by the way, are the letters of Elizabeth's *beau cavalier*, Lord Craven?

A. L. ROWSE.

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SKETCHES FROM LIFE. Percival L.
Witherby. *H. F. and G. Witherby Ltd.* 8s. 6d. net.

IN a recent review (not of this collection) John Betjeman has given it as his opinion that in a short story there ought to be a plot, clearly defined characters, a strong atmosphere and tension.

Most of the New Zealand authors contributing to this volume obviously hold no such views. It is true that Katherine Mansfield, who is here represented by some of her best work, dispensed with a

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plot ; but Katherine Mansfield is in a class by herself—a world-famous literary figure. She needs no plot. Her characters and atmosphere create the necessary tension. Perhaps the test of the true artist lies in communicating some of the emotional excitement felt at the moment of creation—a sense of wonder, of some mystery lying beneath the superficial, material aspect of things. No one can read Katherine Mansfield, even when she is merely describing the hot sunshine beating down on “exhausted looking bathing dresses . . . prone on the pad-dock, flung over fences,” without being aware of this inner excitement. It is the memory of a New Zealand summer holiday—of the seaside shacks when “each back window seemed to have a pair of sandshoes on the sill and some lumps of rock or a bucket or a collection of Pawa shells. The bush quivered in a haze of heat ; the sandy road was empty. . . .”

This is not just a catalogue of things seen ; it is the record of emotion felt in a day gone by.

Many of the writers in this series of stories, evidently admiring Katherine Mansfield's work, have done their best, perhaps unconsciously, to imitate her in meticulous attention to detail. But the feeling—the passion of the artist—which lies beneath all Katherine Mansfield's writing, is absent.

On the whole I do not think that these stories, excepting Katherine Mansfield's, give at all a fair idea of this beautiful Dominion and its kindly, hospitable people. The editor admits that almost all the stories here are about work, or never far from work. It is quite true that the majority of New Zealanders are workers, but not all are such ardent beer-drinkers, or so prone to profanity. There is a cultured, if not a leisured, class, yet most of these stories ignore it.

The writers of the stories in which the Maoris occupy the centre of the stage, however, have observed truly, and with sympathy and understanding ; they have not over-sentimentalized this childish yet intelligent and generous race. *The Whare*, by Douglas Stewart, is to my mind the

best of these Maori stories. It shows an imaginative sympathy and a kindness rather lacking elsewhere. One feels that these New Zealand writers are desperately afraid of appearing unsophisticated or sentimental. At all costs they must give the impression of being hard-boiled.

Sixty years ago, Rudyard Kipling, then in New Zealand, wrote for the *New Zealand Herald* something he called “A Fantasy,” an interview with the Spirit of Truth who appeared to him from a pool in the Thermal Region of the North Island. In reply to his complaint that there were as yet no stories of New Zealand she told him to be patient—they would come. “It's no easy work to weave the souls of men into their surroundings,” she said. “But in time the men will be of the land. Then the people will know themselves and wonder at their own lives.”

Yet the stories outlined by the Spirit of Truth to Kipling—stories which had for their background the Southern Alps, “where the water comes down cold as ice and chokes men and horses and tosses them out on the shingle a dozen miles down-stream,” or the settlers' small homestead where in “the long breathless days the iron roof works uneasily over the new wood framing . . . and outside the rush of the wild horses across the crackling dried swamp bed as it reels in the sun haze”—might be dismissed by some of the present writers as hackneyed and out-moded. The story of the remittance man, dead by his own hand in shame and despair, might be deemed melodramatic ; that of “gentle lives as sheltered in the midst of the turmoil as the ferns in the gorge—lives of ease, elegance, and utter peace,” might be smiled at as unrealistic and commonplace.

Kipling wrote : “They were old tales but upon each lay the stamp, inimitable and indescribable of a new land, and of fresh minds turning the thought, old as Adam, to sights as new as the latest road over the mountains.” These would be the ideal New Zealand stories, and if this present volume acts as a stimulus and encouragement to young New Zealand writers, it will be amply justified.

A warning to the new reader

DURING the last few months, some 10,000 readers have changed to the Manchester Guardian. This is agreeable to us, and encouraging. But are we in danger of becoming a 'successful' newspaper, with all the failings that this word implies?

We hope not, and we think not. These new readers must take us as they find us. They are intelligent people. They will hardly expect the Manchester Guardian to dance to their tune, or to tremble lest occasionally a point of view conflicts with theirs. The Manchester Guardian is an outspoken newspaper, which takes its mission seriously (although never solemnly!)

A newspaper is an important influence in the life of the regular reader. Let that newspaper, then, be the best that, in this fallible world, fallible men can produce. The Manchester Guardian can make no higher claim than that it does its best to respect the truth, the English language, and the reader. You may find that this is exactly what you want.

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please write to: The Manchester Guardian, Manchester.*

If "the style is the man," then the author and illustrator of *Sketches from Life* (which appeared some time ago, but may be mentioned appropriately in this context) is kindly wise and tolerant—the sort of person one would feel glad to call one's friend. The description of Kensington Gardens in the early morning, at mid-day, and again in the evening, would make any exile from London homesick for a glimpse once more of the Round Pond and the Broad Walk. *Un mauvais Quart d'heure* is quite gruesomely thrilling until one is given an explanation of the adventure, while the *Southend Pessimist* is in reality a helpful and entertaining account of a remarkable and far-seeing old man who is truly good.

But I think the author need not have tantalized us with the *Match Game*. I shall always be anxious to know how it was worked!

ROSEMARY REES.

Novels

A SINGLE PILGRIM. Norman Lewis.
Cape. 12s. 6d.

A SHARE OF THE WORLD. Hugo Charteris.
Collins. 12s. 6d.

THE IMAGE AND THE SEARCH. Warner Baxter. *Heinemann*. 12s. 6d.

A POCKETFUL OF RYE. Agatha Christie.
Collins. 11s. 6d.

SAINTS IN HELL. Gilbert Cesbron. *Secker and Warburg*. 12s. 6d.

AS a subject for novels, the interaction of the Englishman, whether magistrate or merchant, and the inhabitants and problems of far-off countries has taken a sharp turn during the last few years. *A Single Pilgrim* is a very sensitive and contemporary exploration of it. Mr. Norman Lewis is well known for his travel books on Siam, which is also the setting of this novel. John Crane represents a British timber company which has had concessions in Laos in many years. Their position has been undermined by growing national consciousness and by Communist infiltration from Indo-China, but Crane, who knows and loves the country, is confident that they can hold on. He is wrong,

and with his discovery of that is bound up his personal story

It is perhaps inevitable in this kind of book that the general setting should tend to dominate the personal stories and that more than one of the characters should recall Crane's description of the manager of a French timber concession who has gone native, "a stock type of far-Eastern fiction." The descriptions of the country, however, are superb. I would not spare a word of the enchanting account of the New Year Festivities in Nakon, even if it holds up the action, and the author's loving citations of endearing details about the place and the people make lovely embroidery around what cannot help being, for us, a tragic tale. Perhaps, says someone in the book, there is a future for the white man in the East as a person. There is certainly none for him as a ruling caste.

If *A Single Pilgrim* uses material which is essentially familiar although brought up to date in detail, what shall be said of *A Share of the World*? "The nightmare paralysis that divided the will from the wish," that is going to make the young Guards officer lose his head on the patrol assigned to him and shoot one of his own men by mistake, how well we know that it is going to reach back to nightmares in the nursery, to a boy terrified of going into Chapel because he was late. How often, how much too often, have we been there before. Yet *A Share of the World* is the most brilliant first novel that I have read for a very long time. It is lyrical, sub-ironical and dramatic in turn; its characters, even the least of them, come to life in the first words they speak, the heart strings are not plucked, the reader is not nudged and no note is overplayed.

A lot of people will probably read *The Image and the Search* because it is "all about sex." Quite a few people will be shocked by it too. Others will be bored because sex, shorn of its antennæ into the mind and spirit, and its social context, is, to the adult, not a serious subject. Quite deliberately, it would seem, Mr. Warner Baxter, who is clearly a serious novelist, has stripped his heroine, Sarah Valmont, of every characteristic which might give

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her sex life some significance. She has no religious beliefs, therefore there is no inner conflict; she is rich and the only child of an easy-going father who dies early on, therefore no social problem; she is, furthermore, barren, which seems to me a wise dispensation of Providence. I ploughed through rather heavily ecstatic accounts of Sarah's perfect union with her husband Robert, who is killed in the war, and through very realistic accounts of her attempts to recover his image in fugitive and sometimes grimy sex encounters. I was on the verge of giving up, in spite of the encomiums of Mr. Baxter's first novel from critics I respect, when the book suddenly came alive and assumed meaning. In the latter part Sarah's restlessness takes her to India where her father had interests in the *lac* trade. The still remote province of Bihar and its people are brilliantly described and the tiresome Sarah becomes tolerable when she encounters forms of life and philosophies which her self-absorption has never before allowed her to consider. The sensual pull of the climate and the surroundings drive her to the edge of experience, and on the last page she learns what has been wrong with her, that in concentrating on her own uniqueness she has denied the uniqueness of others.

No-one has done more to popularize murder in the middle classes than Agatha Christie. What can one say of a new Christie? That it flows like cream from a jug, that it turns on suspicion neatly and destroys it in just the same way, that it is set in that pattern of comfortable English life where everybody behaves well until somebody gets murdered, that, in short, it makes crime a pleasure. *A Pocketful of Rye* is a Miss Marple story, and the Miss Marple stories are not, to me, in the same class as the Poirot stories. But so much better than anyone else's Miss Marples. This one deals with the murder of an unpleasant financier, unpleasant in the old-fashioned sense, not in the new-fashioned psychological-delving sense, for this authoress does not fish in such muddy waters. His beautiful second wife, an immediate suspect, is rapidly disposed of

by cyanide; was it her suburban Don Juan of a lover or either of her two stepsons and their wives? Here are the bizarre small details which Agatha Christie uses always with such effect; the handful of grain in the corpse's pockets, and the corpse's name was Rex; the stinking blackbirds in the pie; the cruel killing of the kitchen maid and the peg stuck on her nose; one by one come the corpses and the clues, while Miss Marple sits gossiping about church bazaars upstairs with an old aunt who specializes in hell fire. It must be read at a sitting, and it will, by thousands and thousands.

Saints in Hell is a translation by John Russell of a novel which has caused a great sensation in France. It is part of the life of a worker-priest, the son of a Northern miner, whose earliest recollection was that of being roused from his warm bed to wait at the gates of the mine for the survivors of a disaster. The worker-priests have no parish, they go into factories and live among the people. Their mission is the original one, to win souls, and, in the twentieth century, this has come to mean to fight Communism. There has been much controversy over the worker-priests, some of whom have been accused of going over to the enemy. This story shows how and why. The characters are a handful of wretchedly poor people living in slum tenements in a Paris suburb; the first call on Pierre the priest is not their souls but their bodies, so wretchedly housed and fed. The people grow to trust him, he even makes converts, but the *bien penseurs* are scandalized by the company he keeps, the prostitutes, the bullies, the Communist agitator Henri, with whom he is perpetually at loggerheads, but with whom he is almost always compelled to act. The climax of scandal comes when the two, the priest and the Communist, give evidence in favour of a man accused of ill-treating his small son; the accusation is true but these two witnesses have come to indict the conditions which are the breeding ground of such crimes. The case becomes a sensation: Pierre is relieved of his mission by the Cardinal and Henri is relieved of his

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secretaryship of the Party for consorting with priests. In a very well written scene the two men, never acknowledging the affection they have come to feel for each other, part.

Much of the book is very moving, although some of the premises seem debatable. But in face of deep human misery can a Christian do anything but help first? Nothing can resolve the essential differences between Pierre, the priest and Henri, the Marxist—nothing but their common humanity. This is not enough, but it is something, and it should never be forgotten. The most brilliant pieces of writing in the book are the description of Pierre's walk down the Champs Elysées, a lovely fairy-tale world so different from the fetid slums of Sagny, and the moving portrait of the late Cardinal Suhard. I could not recommend this book for enjoyment: I do recommend it as a dramatic and obviously truthful account of a bold Christian experiment.

RUBY MILLAR.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

THE reputation of the late George Orwell as a writer of forthright English and one of the leading satirists of his time is growing with the years. *England Your England* (Secker & Warburg. 12s. 6d.) is another posthumous collection of his essays, some of which have never appeared in book form before. They cannot be numbered among his most important work but the autobiographical *Why I Write* and the criticism of Henry Miller and other contemporary writers in *Inside the Whale* deserve to be preserved.

It is possible to overdo the length of biographical studies and interesting though Miss Carola Oman's *Sir John Moore* (Hodder & Stoughton. 42s.) is, it certainly is a Leviathan of a book. Moore was one of those unfortunates fixed in popular imagination by an

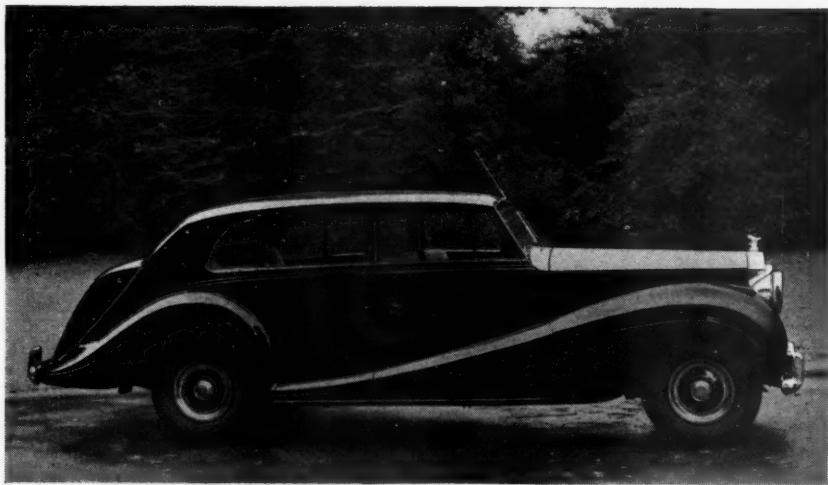
indifferent and inaccurate poem. In fact he was lively, strong and able. People called him great and good. Here are 640 pages of colourful, vivid biography.

The Bombard Story (Deutsch. 12s. 6d.) by Dr. Alain Bombard, and *Underwater Saboteur* (Kimber. 15s.) by Max Manus have one thing in common. It is the remarkable bravery of the two authors. Dr. Bombard describes how he crossed the Atlantic in a rubber dinghy, living on plankton, raw fish and salt water. Mr. Manus made a habit of swimming out in order to attack German destroyers with home-made torpedoes. Two very strong recommends for readers who cherish the unconventionally adventurous.

Sir Ernest Barker has warmed and stimulated the lives of three universities and goodness knows how many committees and commissions. To hear him speak is to listen to one of the most heartening rumbles in the world. *Age and Youth* (Cumberlege: O.U.P. 21s.) contains his modest and shrewd reminiscences of Oxford, London, and Cambridge. A wise and mellow book.

Most Field-M Marshals nowadays seem to reach for their paint brushes when they discard their batons. Lord Ironside has beguiled his leisure hours by compiling a brief record of his personal experiences at *Archangel*, 1918-19 (Constable. 21s.). It is an unpretentious, high-spirited, readable book.

Mr. Bernard Berenson's name inspires equal enthusiasm and doubt in contemporary art circles. I find his books delightful to read but I should not dare to review one of his technical works. It should be noted that Messrs. Chapman & Hall have just issued his *Seeing and Knowing*. (18s.) and *Caravaggio: His Incongruity and His Fame* (18s.). Well produced and illustrated.



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It is not easy to write about the Baroness Ravensdale's *In Many Rhythms* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 21s.) because the author has been allowed by her publishers to cram the contents of three or four volumes into one. Lady Ravensdale's generous enthusiasms, her enormous range of interests, and her varied travels deserved more lavish treatment. I was left breathless and exhausted.

* * *

Dickensiana is growing week by week, and now Mr. Michael Harrison presents *Charles Dickens: A Sentimental Journey in search of an Unvarnished Portrait* (Cassell. 21s.). Places and aspects of the novelist's life alternate in a readable but untidy book.

* * *

In *Our Advancing Years* (Phoenix House. 16s.) Dr. Trevor Howell makes a

useful contribution to a current problem. What is being done for old people to-day? Practical and sensible.

* * *

On the Air (Deutsch. 16s.) is a sound study of broadcasting and television by Dr. Roger Manvell, who knows what he is talking about. There is a good chapter on "The B.B.C's Monopoly and its Critics."

* * *

Cartoons, unless unbelievably pointless, can be useful pointers to the period. Mr. David Low has not retained all his pristine freshness but *Low Visibility* (Collins. 12s. 6d.) has the old irritant, and occasionally amusing properties. It covers the last eight years.

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Books in Brief

I was disappointed by Mr. Louis T. Stanley's charmingly decorated *Life in Cambridge* (Hutchinson. 21s.), illustrated by David Knight. There is no doubting the author's pious regard for his university but the little essays are so slight and short that they do not add up to a satisfying general impression.

* * *

Books on criminology seem to be growing in popularity. In *Hatred, Ridicule or Contempt* (Constable. 15s.) Mr. Joseph Dean assembles twenty-two English libel cases. The inevitable Lord Alfred Douglas appears once more. The others range from the 1820's to the 1940's.

* * *

Mr. Peter Mayne makes a good beginning with his original and amusing travel book, *The Alleys of Marrakesh* (Murray. 15s.). It is the real, lively thing.

* * *

Two theatrical books which will make pleasant Christmas presents for theatre lovers are *Fortune's Favourite: The Life and Times of Franz Lehar* (Hutchinson. 21s.) by W. Macqueen-Pope and D. L. Murray, and *Off-Stage* (Elek. 18s.) by Charles Landstone, who tells the story of twelve years of State-sponsored theatre. The authors are experts who write with friendly enthusiasm about the stage and its vagaries.

* * *

The Channel Islands (Hale. 18s.) by Wilfred D. Hooke are so full of interest, beauty and history that they seem to be rather crowded in the latest volume of the "Country Books" Series. Full of information and splendid illustrations.

* * *

It was a happy idea of Messrs. Hutchinson to issue again *English Wits* (10s. 6d.) a series of essays on fourteen humorous writers ranging from Pope to Saki, and including surprisingly Henry Labouchere and Miss Mitford. Mr. Leonard Russell has got together a powerful team to discuss them.

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Books in Brief

* * *

To hear Elena Gerhardt sing was one of the great experiences of the concert hall. *Recital* (Methuen. 18s.) is the quiet, unassuming story of her triumphant career, written by herself. There is an important chapter on *Lieder* singing.

* * *

In Search of Winter Sport (Evans. 18s.) is the ideal book for someone who has skied or wants to ski, and it is full of good advice for those who are off on a winter sports holiday. Mr. Monk Gibbon is an able writer and poet, and this book is far above the usual run of such things.

* * *

There will be many readers for Lord Beveridge's reminiscences, *Power and Influence* (Hodder & Stoughton. 30s.). Although it is largely autobiographical it is also an illustration of the theme set down in the title. The author hopes it may be of value to "some historian of the future."

E. G.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

A BUSINESSLIKE DREAM

By GEOFFREY DEARMER

"ERIC GILLET has sent me to you for advice. I want a book for a child of eleven —"

"Woman," I said, "nine book buyers out of ten begin like that. And what does the harassed bookseller's assistant reply but 'This is selling well'? Now, best sellers may not be bad, but children have no critical faculty and their parents' choices may be out of date and out of print. Not necessarily," I added hastily, Dent's Children's Illustrated Classics have a goodly selection, all beautifully illustrated, from *Alice* and Hans Andersen down to *Little Women* and *Good Wives*, and Charlotte M. Yonge's *Book of Golden Deeds* (Everyman's Library). What? *Black Beauty*? There are at least two editions of Anna

Sewell's masterpiece—in Everyman's, illustrated by Lucy Kemp-Welch (who for years held the field as a painter of horses) and in the 8s. 6d. Illustrated Classics, bigger print on better paper, of course, by the same artist. Kingsley's *The Water Babies* did you say?"

"My favourite book," she replied.

I began to respect the woman. "My only quarrel with the Children's Book Trade about *The Water Babies*," I said, "is that Kingsley's masterpiece is now unobtainable, as far as I am aware, with the original Linley Sambourne illustrations. That, to my mind, is a crime comparable to publishing *Alice* without Tenniel! Oh! by the way, you can get *Alice* with the Tenniel drawings in the Penguin series, at two shillings each. An artist can't be blamed for not being Linley Sambourne, but a contemporary artist is best qualified to give you the flavour of the period and of the author's attitude to life. Mr. A. E. Jackson is not a contemporary, but his illustrations to *The Water Babies* are good, and the O.U.P. edition at 8s. 6d. is a nice one. By the way, the O.U.P. also do *Kidnapped*, *Catriona*, *Treasure Island*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Swiss Family Robinson*, all excellent editions, at 8s. 6d. each."

"What about Mrs. Molesworth?" asked the lady, lowering her eyes reverently.

My opinion of the woman went up even higher. If there ever was a writer for children who understood the mind and heart of a young child, it was Mrs. Molesworth.

"Mrs. Molesworth's two best books are——"

"*The Tapestry Room* and *The Cuckoo Clock*."

"Why do you come to me when you know so much already?" I asked humbly.

"I want to know if they are in print. It's maddening to go to a bookshop on a reviewer's recommendation——"

"They are," I said. "*The Tapestry Room* is published by Harvill at 6s. and *The Cuckoo Clock* by Macmillan at 8s. 6d. Of comparatively modern classics, I'll mention only E. Nesbit whose masterpieces

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Books for Children

The Treasure Seekers, The Would be Goods and *The New Treasure Seekers* (not to mention *The Phoenix on the Carpet, Five Children and It* and *The Story of the Amulet*) are published by Ernest Benn at 7s. 6d. I have recently re-read *The New Treasure Seekers* and never enjoyed it so much. It possesses the enchantment and humour of reality combined with that care-dispelling, other-world atmosphere of time not too long past. 4D is better than 3—"

"Much," said the lady, obviously fearing a lyrical outburst. "But we must pass on to the new books, unless there are more classics re-issued?"

"I'd like to mention three. You see, classics are always fairly cheap. Latimer House has re-issued G. A. Henty's *With Wolfe in Canada* at 6s. Bell's have re-issued Mrs. Ewing's classic, *Old-Fashioned Fairy Tales*, delightfully illustrated by Gertrude Mittelmann and Graham Robertson, at 6s. 6d. Mullers have published at 7s. 6d. the anonymous French children's classic, admirably translated by Margaret Cardew, *The History of Mère Michel and Her Cat*, with the original illustrations. This curiosity of children's literature is ideal for reading aloud. It has the terse French economy of style. It is a good story, bright, unsentimental and full of 18th-century Paris reproduced in the excellent period drawings."

"I'm encouraged to read aloud. But books read aloud must interest and should instruct the reader as well as the read-to. History is all-important. Now—"

"Madam, how right you are! I've two new books right at the top of this class. They are *The Fearless Treasure* by Noel Streatfeild (Michael Joseph, 12s. 6d.) and *Ring Out Bow Bells* by Cynthia Harnett (Methuen, 10s. 6d.). Have a look at them."

"They are a pleasure even to peruse. Is the text as good as the illustrations?"

"Every bit. Miss Streatfeild's is the better book, I think, but then it covers a much wider and longer historical field. It is the story of six children who continuously go into, and return from, the past from A.D. 43 till the early 19th century. You'll appreciate, I'm sure, the sound

historical judgment of both authors. Miss Streatfeild has in a way a more enviable and, perhaps, more difficult task. She sets out to show the impact of the *then* on the *now*, but she never forgets that what we should find intolerable in the feudal, pre-soap periods was not so to those who lived in them. She faces injustice and insanitary conditions as we now understand them with humour and understanding, and yet she shows the vigour and vitality that went to make up the living tapestry of her text. Miss Streatfeild is exploratory, Miss Harnett, expository. *Ring Out Bow Bells* is a novel covering the London of Dick Whittington, and deals almost exclusively with the Guilds in a conflict between the Mercers and Grocers. In this, Dickon, the great Dick's godson, is involved. My only complaint about this vivid and scrupulously accurate book is that Miss Harnett's story is an awfully long time in getting under way. It is a long time leaping from the sometimes too trivial accounts of detail to the tremendously exciting episode of the Drawbridge Gate, and we have to wait till Chapter 15 until we get to it. Nevertheless, no student of the period, no schoolmaster or mistress, indeed, no London citizen should neglect to read this book as well as *The Fearless Treasure*. Miss Streatfeild, I know, is at the top of Miss Harnett's admirers, of this book particularly.

"This point reminds me of an absorbing little article and photographs, *The Treasures of a Mudlark* by Ivor Noel Hume in the 1954 *B.B.C. Children's Hour Annual*, edited by May E. Jenkin, so well known, as she was, as 'Elizabeth'. If this book is read as well as looked at, the superior quality of the written matter will be revealed. The scripts (all original, by the way, and written specially for the *Annual*) are as good as the Cansdale and Nomad animal and bird photographs; and the colour illustrations, particularly the enchanting paper mosaics, all help to make up a splendidly varied assortment—an ideal Christmas present, and by no means expensive at 10s. 6d. (Burke). Both T.V. and Sound viewers and listeners will recognize the authors. Barbara Euphan

Todd's play *The Princess and the Pea*, which is included, is as actable as the book is readable. Talking of acting, Roland Pertwee's new book, *An Actor's Life for Me* (O.U.P., 9s. 6d.)—it's a novel, by the way, not a text-book—should not be missed by stage enthusiasts. It is a convincing and amusingly written story of a schoolboy actor, the son of an eminent professional. This is one of the O.U.P. 'career' novels, good up-to-date stories with a really authentic background. The latest is Lorna Lewis's *Hotel Doorway*. This story of four young people who decide to make their way in the labyrinth of hotel management was an eye-opener to me. What jobs there are—what a lot of students are employed in a big hotel! Equally good in its very different way is Laurence Meynell's *Policeman in the Family*, just the book for the out-of-doors boy who is curious to know what, for instance, the C.I.D. is really like.

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"Natural history, did you say? Well, I will mention three books only, all very different and all of the highest class. If your child keeps pets from cats and dogs to the taming of the rescued fledgling and the needs of the newt, you should give him *How's Your Pet?* by L. Hugh Newman, the Children's Hour 'Nature Parliament's' butterfly and moth expert. But Hugh is an excellent all-round naturalist whose forty-eight photographs are as good as the advice he gives. Parents who buy this book (Phœnix House, 10s. 6d.) will save themselves and their children a deal of disappointment and trouble and learn a lot as well. For natural *history* do, I beg you, read Evelyn Cheesman's *Charles Darwin and his Problems* (Bell, 9s. 6d.). Miss Cheesman is no stay-at-home writer-up of other writers' labours. She was an explorer in her own right who, like Darwin, went in search of animals: Miss Cheesman in the pursuit of creatures for the Natural History Museum. She is well qualified to voyage again in the *Beagle* and to present this very great man, here so closely studied and written about in a style as laconic as his. For instance, she writes of the Fuegians: 'There were some hostile receptions, and the habit of throwing rocks or spears was unpleasant.'

"Best in what I may call the natural history novel class is Roy Campbell's *The Mamba's Precipice* (Muller, 8s. 6d.). I was 'wrapped above earth' as I read the book with increasing excitement. The silent, central character, a villain and deserving a villain's end, is a black mamba. A family of white children is involved in the pursuit, and the author, whose experience of South Africa is first-hand, seems unconsciously to remember—unconsciously, for he never condescends—that his readers are untravelled. He sketches the background with a wealth of vivid detail. Sharks and steers and octopuses, the native Zulus, witches—there never was a book, I think, better qualified to make one want to go to Africa and see all this for oneself.

"Adventure stories? Well, Heinemann publishes Aubrey Feist's excellent thrillers and Hutchinson Sea-Lion's up-to-date

Wrecked on the Goodwins. Gilbert Hackforth-Jones's fine novel, *The Sole Survivor* (Hodder and Stoughton, 10s. 6d.) is not too difficult for older children.

"Finally, I must mention a lovely book, Eleanor Farjeon's *Ten Saints* (O.U.P., 12s. 6d.) with its lovely illustrations by Helen Sewell. Eleanor Farjeon is the queen of lyric poetry for children, and these excellent studies, dating from St. Christopher in the 3rd century to St. Francis in the 13th have a charming poem on each Saint. This would, indeed, be a good present for a good child."

She left, inclined, I hoped, to mark some of the books I'd mentioned. But had I recommended the two best and latest school stories for boys, *Jennings' Diary* (Collins, 6s.) and for boys of grammar school age, *Rex Milligan's Busy Term* (Lutterworth, 6s.), both by Anthony Buckeridge, author of the "Jennings at School" radio plays? I had not . . . but I have now!

GEOFFREY DEARMER.

RECORD REVIEW

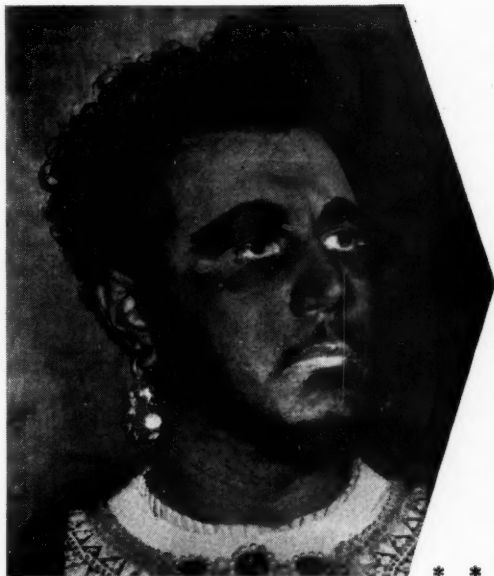
By ALEC ROBERTSON

Orchestral

IT will be interesting to see whether the long-playing record can break down the prejudice harboured by many music lovers in regard to the symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler which, on S.P. discs, seemed so very long; as indeed most of them are. A start is made this month with Bruckner's Fourth and Seventh Symphonies, and Mahler's First, Fifth, and the *Adagio* from the unfinished Tenth. These all receive good and understanding performances, but the recordings of Bruckner's No. 4 (Vox PL6930) and Mahler's No. 1 (Columbia 33CX1068) can only be recommended to the enthusiast who feels he must have the music here and now. Bruckner's noble

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Seventh Symphony (E minor), which contains the impressive slow movement composed in the shadow of the impending death of Wagner, is finely played by Van Beinum and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, with Franck's charming symphonic poem *Psyché* on the fourth side of the two discs (Decca LXT2829-30). Mahler's *Fifth Symphony* (C sharp minor), with the beautiful and well-known *Adagietto* as the third of its five movements, also receives a very good performance by Scherchen and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Both the above are well recorded, and the one movement of the *Tenth Symphony* (F sharp minor), on the last side of the two discs, exceptionally so (Nixa WLP6207, two discs).

Bliss's *Piano Concerto*, composed for the New York World Fair of 1939 and one of the best contemporary works in this form, is prodigiously difficult and demands great sensitivity as well as brilliance from the solo player. Mewton-Wood has both qualities and gives here the performance of his life, backed up by a very lively

rendering of the orchestral part by the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra under Walter Goehr. The recording, a few weak spots apart, is excellent and the whole affair most enjoyable (Nixa CLP1167). Two gay Christmas presents suggest themselves to suit, as they say, all purses: a welcome new recording of Chabrier's "España" *Rhapsody*, Beecham and the R.P.O., to replace the very popular pre-war disc (Columbia LX1592) and two highly coloured pieces by Rimsky-Korsakoff, *Capriccio Espagnole* and *Coq d'Or* Ballet Suite more vividly recorded and played (Dèsormière and the French National Symphony Orchestra—Capitol CTL7020) than the Decca Ansermet version (LXT2769).

Instrumental

Dr. Albert Schweitzer has recorded Bach's *Fantasia and Fugue* in G minor ("The Great"), *Toccata, Adagio*, and *Fugue* in C major and the A minor *Fugue* (without its Prelude) on the organ in the Parish Church of Günsbach, his home town in Alsace, an instrument he especially loves. His *tempi* are slow, as they always were, the melodic lines are drawn with perfect clarity and his playing has a moving nobility that obliterates any small technical faults (Columbia 33CX1074).

It is good to have now Lipatti's wonderful playing of the Bach *B flat Partita* and Mozart's *A minor Sonata* (K310) on an L.P. disc (Columbia 33C1021), and also the first two of the Bach violin and clavier sonatas in the excellent performances of Menuhin and Kentner (H.M.V. BLP1026). Also recommended: Wilhelm Kempff's well-recorded and lovely performance of Schubert's *A minor Sonata*, Op. 42 (Decca LXT2834).

Opera

I was enthralled with Toscanini's recording of *La Bohème*, which, in an excellent recording, enables us to appreciate Puccini's masterly scoring as never before. The great conductor stands no traditional nonsense from his singers, but allows them reasonable latitude; and so much does he love the music that he cannot resist audibly joining in at high emotional

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moments! Albanese, Preece, Anne Mc-Knight are all good and Valentino (as Marcel) very good; but Toscanini centres one on the music not on individuals, and the result is thrilling. The orchestra is that of the N.B.C. (H.M.V. ALP1081-2).

There is also a full-blooded performance of *Pagliacci*, very well recorded, in which Mario de Monaco gives a highly dramatic account of Canio, with Clara Petrella, Afro Poli (an admirable Tonio) and Aldo Protti excellent in the other chief parts. Orchestra and chorus are first rate. The fourth side contains an operatic recital by Monaco, which here and there reveals his limitations. Erede is the very able conductor of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia Orchestra (Decca LXT2845-6).

Also recommended: a fine performance, on the whole well recorded, of Bellini's now rarely heard *Puritani*, with Callas and Stefano outstanding. Serafin conducts the La Scala Orchestra and chorus. This is the first official post-war La Scala recording (Columbia 33CX1058-60).

Vocal

Beecham gives an absolutely inspired performance of Delius's *Mass of Life*, magnificently sung, played, and recorded on Columbia 33CX1078-9. Bruce Boyce excels himself in the part of Zarathustra, and so do the London Philharmonic Choir and the R.P.O. Sir Thomas has, in fact, drawn the very best out of his forces, and the result is, I think, one of the finest recordings I have ever heard. (It needs good equipment to reproduce the great choruses properly.) There are some moments of orchestral playing so beautiful as to bring tears to one's eyes, and there is not a bar in which the composer's vision is not matched by the conductor's. A superb issue.

Also recommended: a well-recorded performance by the Orchestra and Chorus of the National Academy of Saint Cecilia, Rome, under Carlo Guilini, of Cherubini's *Requiem Mass* in C minor. It shows one what Beethoven meant by speaking of the "sustained sublimity of style" of the music (Columbia 33CX1075).

ALEC ROBERTSON.

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CARDIFF.—Park Hotel; Restaurant; Grill; Banqueting Rooms; Cocktail Bar; Gentlemen's Hairdressing; Garage. Phone 2566 (5 lines).

CONWAY.—Castle Hotel. Four first-class Golf Courses, Sea Fishing. Touring centre for North Wales. Phone: 2235.

DUBLIN.—Royal Hibernian. Phone: 72991 (10 lines). Tel.: Hibernia.

DULVERTON, Somerset.—Woodcote Hotel, facing South, on fringe of Exmoor, excellent touring centre. Hunting, walking, own trout fishing. Central heating, log fires. Hot and cold water in all bedrooms. Garage. Club Licence. Open all the year round. Phone: 129.

HOTEL GUIDE

EASTBOURNE.—Hydro Hotel, South Cliff, facing sea. 1st Class accommodation at moderate inclusive terms. Phone 643.

HANKHAM, Sussex.—Glyndley Manor. Select country hotel; central heating, h. & c., electric fires, spacious dining-room; friendly atmosphere; garaging, stabling; pets welcome; lovely grounds; 15 mins. Eastbourne. Licensed. Brochure.

HERSTMONCEUX, Boreham.—The White Friars Hotel. An 18th-century building, appealing to those who appreciate quiet comfort, all bedrooms H. & C., electric fires, interior-sprung mattresses, private bathrooms, excellent cuisine, fully licensed, garages, four acres of well-kept gardens. Tel.: Herstmonceux 3299.

HOVE, Sussex.—Dudley Hotel. 75 rooms, 40 bathrooms. Restaurant open to non-residents—American Bar—Large Garage. Hove 36266. Man. Dir.: F. KUNG (Swiss).

IPSWICH.—Great White Horse Hotel. Made famous by Charles Dickens in *Pickwick Papers*. In the centre of the town. Phone: 3584. Telegrams: "Pickwick, Ipswich."

YORKSHIRE DALES, Kettlewell, via Skipton.—The Race-Horses Hotel; medically recommended; quiet; select; renowned cuisine; recognized motoring centre; beautiful fell moorland and riverside walks. A.A., R.A.C., Phone 233. Tariff from Resident Owner.

KILLARNEY (Ireland).
International Hotel. Tel 16.

LAUNCESTON, Cornwall.—King's Arms Hotel. For the summer months Easter to September 30th our terms will be for garaging car, residence and full board, 17/6 per day, £6-6-0 per week.

LEWES.—White Hart Hotel; large lounge; conservatory; garden; Tudor panelled rooms; hunters and hacks for Sussex Downs. London 65 minutes—Phyllis Walton, Proprietress. Tel. 94.

LANGOLLEN.—Hand Hotel. One of the best in N. Wales. H. & C. water all rooms. Fishing. A.A. and R.A.C. Phone: 3207. Telegrams: "Handotel."

LONDON.—Barkston Gardens Hotel. One minute from Earl's Court Station. Moderate tariff. Phone: Frobisher 1028.

LONDON.—Brown's Hotel. First-class London hotel known throughout the world. Private suites. Phone Regent 6020. Telegrams: "Brownotel, Piccy, London."

LONDON.—Royal Court Hotel, Sloane Square, S.W.1. First-class. Moderate Tariff. 2 lifts. A. Wild Bey, late of Cairo. Sloane 9191.

LONDON, S.W.1.—St. Ermin's Hotel.

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SALISBURY.—White Hart Hotel. 18th-century hotel near the Cathedral and the Market Square. Phone: 219711.

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